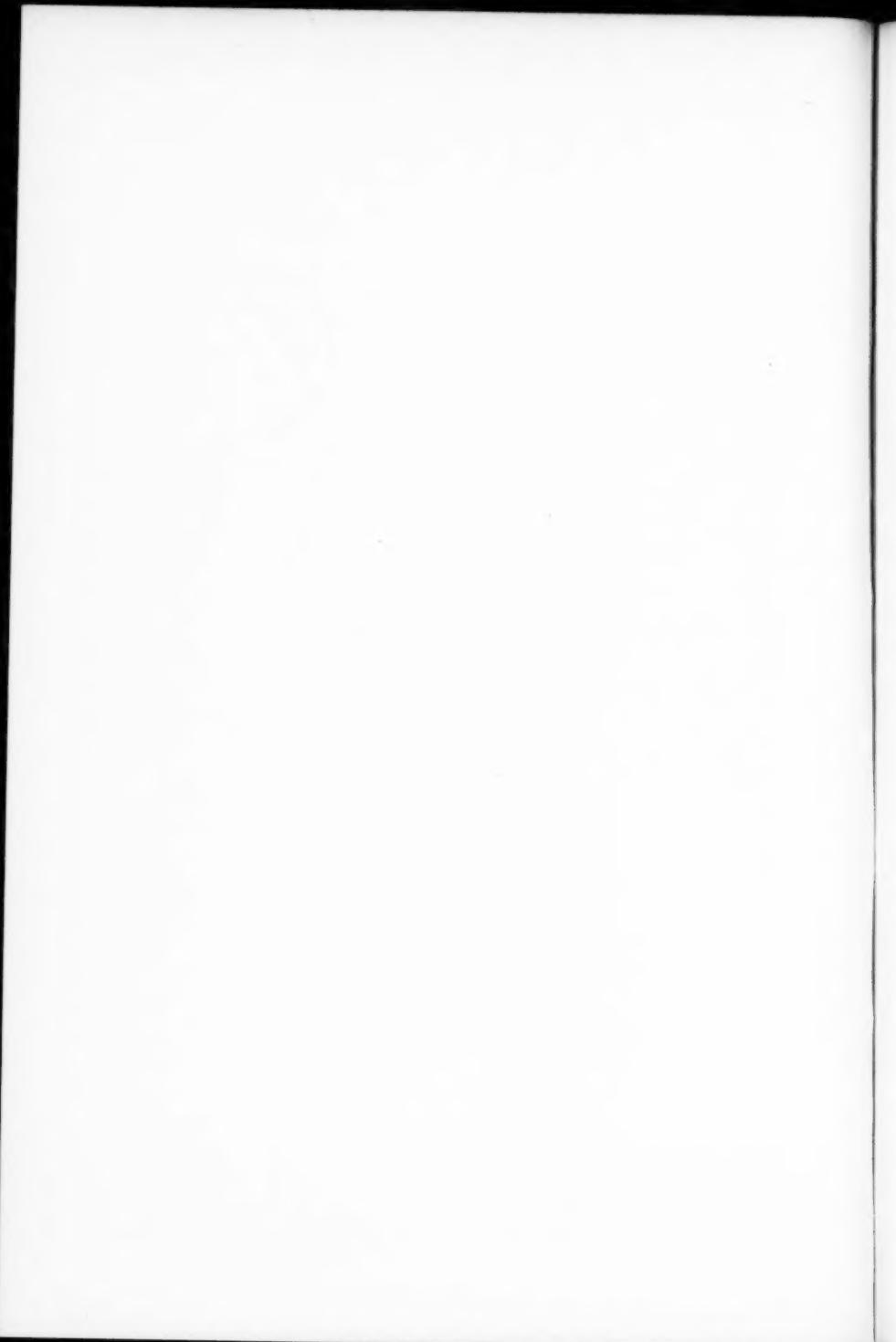


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THE LITERATURE OF THE PIONEER WEST

The same year which has witnessed America's coming of age in the profound historical and critical studies of Mumford, Parrington, and Beard,¹ has witnessed, with singular appropriateness, the appearance of the most penetrating and mature depiction of the westward movement in our literature. It is O. E. Rölvaag's *Giants in the Earth*, and it inspires this encomium because it chronicles as no other volume has that combination of physical and spiritual experience which is the very warp and woof of American history. It indicates in the realm of fiction the same attitude which has already expressed itself in criticism and in history — that the story of America is not the story of physical and material development and expansion to the utter exclusion of the spiritual or psychological. The westward movement ceases to be the victim of romance and becomes a great physical and spiritual adventure. It ceases to be the proud epic of man's conquest of earth and becomes the tragedy of earth's humbling of man.

For a generation American history has been concerned with the significance of the frontier, and American literature with the son of the middle border. These two avenues of approach have led us in history to a wholesome, if occasionally somewhat arid, economic realism, and in literature to romance, but we have not yet come out on the highroad of understanding. Historians, economists, and sociologists have given us their various evaluations of the physical processes and institutions of the frontier and of the westward movement, and novelists have sublimated the chronicle and symbolized it for all time in

¹ Lewis Mumford, *The Golden Day; A Study in American Experience and Culture* (New York, 1926); Vernon L. Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought; An Interpretation of American Literature from the Beginnings to 1920* (2 vols.— New York, 1927); Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization* (2 vols.— New York, 1927).

the covered wagon. But history is no more a physical than a psychological phenomenon, and the significance of the westward movement and of the frontier for the development of American character and the American mind is to be discovered neither in statistics of population growth nor in the camp fire songs of the western trails, but rather in the psychological experiences of the individuals and communities that participated in the great enterprise.

This more mature and reflecting attitude toward the westward movement made its appearance, as might well be suspected, somewhat earlier in criticism than in fiction. Indeed, the earliest travelers in America were frequently struck with the psychological aspects of the frontier experience and of the influence of pioneering on the American mind: thus Crevecoeur and the Duc de Liancourt at the time of the Revolution, thus Harriet Martineau and Mrs. T. A. Trollope and Fredrika Bremer in the first half of the nineteenth century, and thus those two major observers, De Tocqueville and James Bryce. Nor were American critics unaware of this aspect of the frontier. Henry Adams, with his customary penetration, suggested something of the influence of environment not only on the economic development of the frontier but on the cultural and spiritual as well, and touched on the disparity between the grandeur of the physical environment and the meanness of the cultural experience.

This conception of the westward movement as a cultural phenomenon, as a chapter in the history of the American mind and American psychology, did not gain general acceptance. Historians continued to write of the West as an economic concept. And where the psychological aspect was touched upon, it was commonly clothed in general terms, in pretty phraseology, usually in a romantic idealism somewhat more appropriate to fiction than to history. Historians described the buoyant pioneer and the zest and energy of pioneering, and even Adams grew lyric in the prospect of the plowboy

some day going to the field whistling a sonata of Beethoven. The West was the vessel of idealism, the stronghold of democracy, the promise of progress, the vindication of the great American experiment. The scientific school of Turner and his followers directed attention more exclusively to the economic realities of the westward movement, but they did not fundamentally alter the idealistic conception.

This idealistic conception communicated itself to the literature of the West, though to be sure the process was one of interrelations and interactions. From the day of Cooper and Montgomery Bird and William G. Simms to Owen Wister and Emerson Hough and Zane Grey and Herbert Quick, the westward movement was portrayed as a crusade, symbolized in the covered wagon and celebrated in that magnificent chorus that Hamlin Garland has given us:

Then over the hills in legions, boys,
Fair freedom's star
Points to the sunset regions, boys . . .

Ah, that was it. The sunset regions! Out where the West begins! And Whitman consecrated it with one of his most inspired lyrics:

Have the elder races halted?
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

But there were sceptics who doubted the authenticity of the creation story. They had witnessed, perhaps, the labor, and they distinctly remembered that it had been painful and arduous. They repudiated the aureole of romance and glamour which a past generation had thrown over it, and offered instead their own narrative, bearing the authentic stamp of personal experience. The new realism found its first expression

in two volumes strangely neglected by the brilliant author of the *Mauve Decade*. Edward W. Howe, in *The Story of a Country Town*, offered a tragedy too stark, a masterpiece too honest, for the generation of the *fin de siècle* and allowed a later generation to hail *Main Street* as original; and Hamlin Garland, in *Main Travelled Roads*, presented farm life in Wisconsin and Iowa in all its grim and unprepossessing actualities, "with a proper proportion of the sweat, flies, heat, dirt and drudgery of it all."

In the course of the next three decades the ranks of the heretics grew until realism became orthodoxy. The continuity from the *Story of a Country Town* to *Main Street*, from *Main Travelled Roads* to *Iowa Interiors*, is an obvious and unbroken one. The realistic school of the middle border has attained respectability: it numbers among its disciples Willa Cather and Margaret Wilson, Frank Norris and Edgar Lee Masters, Ruth Suckow and Edith Kelly, and even William Dean Howells and Francis Grierson, with their neglected stories of early Ohio and Illinois; and it has achieved the comfortable recognition of learned dissertations, ponderous bibliographies, and rather uncertain interpretative essays.

Indeed, it has achieved more than this doubtful beatification. For by one of those curiously consistent developments from radicalism to conservatism, from realism to romanticism, the arch leader of the rebels himself, Hamlin Garland, waved the magic wand of romance over the scenes of his boyhood and enveloped them in a nimbus of beauty, and we might paraphrase Ariel that

Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a land-change
Into something rich and strange.

The result is the *Son of the Middle Border*, the classic narrative of pioneer life in the West, and it portrays in colors of incomparable loveliness the heroic saga of the westward movement. There is realism here, to be sure, but over it all Garland

has thrown something of the lovely grace of a day that is dead and will never come back to him:

It all lies in the unchanging realm of the past — this land of my childhood. Its charm, its strange dominion cannot return save in the poet's reminiscent dream. No money, no railway train can take us back to it. It did not in truth exist — it was a magical world, born of the vibrant union of youth and firelight, of music and the voice of moaning winds.²

But this was not the West of *Main Travelled Roads*, nor even of *Rose of Dutcher's Cooley*. The *Son of the Middle Border* is the most exquisite presentation of pioneer life in our literature, but the criticism of Mumford is pertinent:

The post-Civil War writers who deal with *Roughing It*, *A Son of the Middle Border*, or *A Hoosier Schoolmaster*, to mention only a few examples, had already abandoned the scene of the pioneer's efforts and had returned to the East: they made copy of their early life, but, though they might be inclined to sigh after it, because it was associated with their youth, they had only a sentimental notion of continuing it.³

With the exception, indeed, of Willa Cather, the writers of the middle border were overwhelmingly concerned with the physical and material aspects of life. It is the taking up of the land, the struggle with the soil, the physical environment that dominates the scene. Their interest is centered upon the economy of the westward movement. To a certain extent, therefore, their stories are propaganda; they form the literary chapter in the history of the agrarian revolt.

This chapter in American literature, then, furnishes a striking parallel to the synchronous chapter in American historiography. *Main Travelled Roads* is the literary articulation of Buck's *Granger Movement*, and the *Son of the Middle Border* of Turner's "Contributions of the West to American Democracy." With their attention fixed so largely upon the taking up of the land, the novelists of the middle border emulate the

² Hamlin Garland, *A Son of the Middle Border*, 67 (New York, 1917).

³ Mumford, *The Golden Day*, 62.

historians of the middle border, and the interpretation is an economic one.

The appearance of the volumes of Mumford, Parrington, and Beard seems to mark the beginning of a new era in American historiography—the “sober second thought” of the historian, the intellectual maturity of the critic. The emphasis in these studies is on the cultural and psychological aspects of American history rather than on the economic, though Beard’s volumes may be something of an exception to this generalization. It appears, indeed, that in American as in European historical writing we are entering upon that era of psychological interpretation which Professor J. W. Thompson prophesied some time ago. Nowhere is this more evident than in the criticism of the westward movement. From the economic point of view that phenomenon was an epic. From the psychological point of view it was a tragedy. The intrinsic subjectivity of the facts of history which Carl Becker celebrates with such malign satisfaction never received apter illustration.

It is fitting and not altogether without significance that this new attitude in history should find concomitant literary expression. It is for this reason that we can hail *Giants in the Earth* as a milestone in American literature. It is not only that it portrays more completely than any other novel the synthesis of what Schlesinger has happily termed the “two grand themes of American history”—the westward movement and immigration. It is rather because for the first time, adequately, in the literature of the middle border the primary concern is not economic but psychological; the main interest of the story centers not on the taking up of the land but on the effect of that experience upon the characters. For the first time a novelist has measured the westward movement with a psychological yardstick and found it wanting.

We do not necessarily imply that Rölvaag is either the first or the only author to call attention to the psychological aspects

of the westward movement. Neither Garland nor Howe, nor their numerous successors, have ignored this element. Willa Cather, indeed, in her remarkable *O Pioneers!* and *My Antonia*, has dwelt intelligently and sympathetically upon the problem. To a certain extent she may be said to anticipate Rölvaag and some passages from her volumes might serve as a text for *Giants in the Earth*:

But the great fact was the land itself, which seemed to overwhelm the little beginnings of human society that struggled in its sombre wastes. It was from facing this vast hardness that the boy's mouth had become so bitter; because he felt that men were too weak to make any mark here, and the land wanted to be let alone, to preserve its own fierce strength, its peculiar, savage kind of beauty, its uninterrupted mournfulness.*

But, withal, Miss Cather records the triumph of Alexandra and of Antonia over their grim environment, and her novels are panels rather than murals.

Hamlin Garland has furnished us, perhaps, with the explanation of the partial failure of the novelists of the middle border to penetrate the spiritual life of the frontier. He was looking back upon his first courageous efforts, when he said, "I intend to tell the whole truth." He confesses, however: "But I didn't! Even my youthful zeal faltered in the midst of a revelation of the lives led by the women on the farms of the middle border. Before the tragic futility of their suffering, my pen refused to shed its ink. Over the hidden chamber of their maternal agonies I drew the veil."⁶ Rölvaag is not less tender, but he is inexorable. The even tenor of his tale nowhere falters, nor does he choose to draw the veil of silence over the "tragic futility" of the women's suffering, over the "hidden chamber of their maternal agonies." Indeed, it might be said that his volume is primarily concerned with the "futility of their suffering," and the emphasis is not so much on suffering as on futility. Of all tragedies the most poignant is that of

* Willa S. Cather, *O Pioneers!*, 15 (Boston and New York, 1913).

⁶ Garland, *A Son of the Middle Border*, 416.

futility. Not to have suffered, but to have suffered in vain, ah, there's the rub!

And futility is the moral of *Giants in the Earth*. Of what avail is the conquest of the soil by man; the scars which man inflicts upon the virgin earth are as nothing to the scars which nature inflicts upon the souls of men. Against physical environment men can indeed struggle, and they can emerge successful. The earth can be made to yield its bountiful crops, the forests timber, and the rivers fish. Men can build homes to shelter them from the fury of the elements, they can close out the bitter cold and the fierce storms. To the indomitable courage and energy of man nature must yield her grudging tribute. But what of the souls of men here on the distant plains? What of the infinite loneliness, of the secret fears, of the primeval silences that shake the faith of men? What of that concern with the salvation of the physical being that sacrifices the salvation of the soul? And what of the pleasures of social intercourse, the homely comforts of a homely culture, the social and religious and family life of simple folks? Aye, man might wrest a living out of nature here on the dreary prairies, but nature would wrest civilization from man. And what indeed shall it profit a man that he gain the world if he lose his soul? The life is more than the living, and living could be achieved only at the cost of life itself.

This literary diagnosis of the spiritual realities of pioneer life harmonizes strikingly with the critical interpretation of Mumford; the narrative and the interpretation are complementary, and passages from the latter merely point the moral and adorn the tale.

The vast gap between the hope of the Romantic Movement and the reality of the pioneer period is one of the most sardonic jests of history. On one side, the bucolic innocence of the Eighteenth Century, its belief in a fresh start, and its attempt to achieve a new culture. And over against it, the epic march of the covered wagon, leaving behind it deserted villages, bleak cities, depleted soils, and the sick and exhausted souls that engraved their epitaphs in Mr. Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. . . .

The truth is that the life of the pioneer was bare and insufficient: he did not really face Nature, he merely evaded society. Divorced from its social context, his experience became meaningless.*

Per Hansa, buoyant, vital, lovable, with his hand to the plow and his eyes fixed hopefully upon a golden future, and Beret, his wife, disconsolate and sick at heart, physically, mentally, spiritually stricken by her cruel experience — these are Rölvaaq's symbols for the hope of the romantic movement and the reality of the pioneer West. The symbolism is sustained and terribly convincing. It is Beret, at first a tragic figure in the background, who gradually dominates the scene, just as spiritual tragedy overwhelms physical phenomena. Her experience, subtly and profoundly described by Rölvaaq, loses its immediate application and becomes as universal as that of Goethe's Margarete. It is this ability to universalize, to translate the experience of his characters into spiritual values of catholic and transcendent significance, that stamps *Giants in the Earth* as a work of genius.

The "two grand themes of American history" Rölvaaq has infused with a profound psychological significance. Immigration ceases to become the story of Americanization and becomes the problem of spiritual adaptation and acclimatization. The westward movement is metamorphized from an economic enterprise or a romantic epic and becomes a struggle against the "power of evil in high places." The characters of this drama are not hailing "fair freedom's star," but "facing the great desolation." Not for them the triumphant song of "Pioneers! O pioneers," but the silence "on the border of utter darkness."

It is upon the eternal verities that Rölvaaq concentrates — on birth and death and suffering — and he recites them with a profound understanding and a tender sympathy and yet without sentimentality. The birth of Peter Victorious is the focal fact of the book; he is for Per Hansa a symbol of victory, for

* Mumford, *The Golden Day*, 79.

Beret a symbol of sin. Over him this strangely and beautifully mated pair wage their silent battle for life and salvation, and when Per Hansa wins and the child is restored to grace and the mother to sanity, it is by a religion which is the harbinger of death. It is the "eternal yea" and the "eternal nay" echoed here on the western plains, but Per Hansa's magnificent "yea" was to be choked out by the icy hand of death. "The Great Plain drinks the blood of Christian men"—it is the handwriting on the wall of American history.

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THE UNFINISHED AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY

INTRODUCTION

Henry Hastings Sibley has been characterized as "the most prominent figure in Minnesota" from 1834 to 1891.¹ As fur-trader, frontier politician, representative in Congress, first governor of the state, commander of the forces that quelled the Sioux Indians in 1862 and 1863, university regent, and public-spirited citizen, he was associated in outstanding fashion with most of the important Minnesota happenings from the thirties to the nineties. Naturally, printed material on his career is abundant. As long ago as 1889 Nathaniel West brought out a book on Sibley's ancestry, life, and times, a work which, although uncritical in approach, possesses considerable historical interest, especially because of the documentary material that it embodies.² A generation later a student of the westward movement in American history, Dr. Wilson P. Shortridge, wrote a monograph on the career of Sibley treated in its setting of the transition of the western frontier from wilderness to civilization.³ This study, a contribution of much value, was based in part upon the Sibley Papers and other manuscript materials in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society. The extensive collection of Sibley Papers,

¹ William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 1: 162 (St. Paul, 1921).

² The title of West's book, which was published in St. Paul, is *The Ancestry, Life, and Times of Hon. Henry Hastings Sibley, LL.D.*

³ Shortridge's monograph is formidably entitled *The Transition of a Typical Frontier with Illustrations from the Life of Henry Hastings Sibley, Fur Trader, First Delegate in Congress from Minnesota Territory, and First Governor of the State of Minnesota* (Menasha, Wisconsin, 1922). A review of this book by Wayne E. Stevens appears *ante*, 5: 48-52. Shortridge has also published a condensation of his monograph in the article "Henry Hastings Sibley and the Minnesota Frontier," *ante*, 3: 115-125. Mention should also be made of J. Fletcher Williams' "Henry Hastings Sibley, a Memoir," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 6: 257-310.

consisting of the correspondence, account books, and miscellaneous papers preserved by Sibley himself, is of exceptional interest for the student of the history of Minnesota and the West, and it is of special importance for the story of the later period of the fur trade and for the political history of the territory and state before the Civil War.

West, in preparing his biography, utilized a manuscript autobiography by Sibley, which, up to a short time ago, was believed to be no longer extant. Several passages quoted by West indicated that the autobiography was an informing and charming narrative, and students of Minnesota history were distressed because of the apparent loss of the original manuscript. Fortunately the document had not gone the way of the world, for it proved to be in the possession of Sibley's daughter, Mrs. Elbert A. Young of St. Paul; and in 1924 Mrs. Young, who has since died, deposited the manuscript with the Minnesota Historical Society. The text, in Sibley's own handwriting, is written in a large notebook or ledger.

The Sibley autobiography, which is now given to the public, was begun at Kittrell, North Carolina, in 1884, when the author was a man of seventy-three years; and the latter part of it was apparently written in 1886. It tells the story of Sibley's life up to 1835 in greater detail than is to be found in any other account. Though Sibley published during his lifetime two reminiscent articles,* there is comparatively little duplication in these articles and the autobiography. The latter is an important and interesting original document and is particularly valuable for its account of the author's ancestry and boyhood, its vivid description of the life of the early fur-traders, and its circumstantial narrative of the author's coming to Minnesota. Only a few scenes from his early experiences in Minnesota are pictured. So far as is known, Sibley did not carry

* "Reminiscences, Historical and Personal" and "Reminiscences of the Early Days of Minnesota," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 1: 457-485 (1872 edition); 3: 242-282.

the autobiography beyond the point to which it is brought in these pages. That he did not leave a full-length autobiography is cause for keen regret, but it is fortunate, at any rate, that the fragment herewith presented has been preserved. In preparing the manuscript for publication a few obvious slips of the pen, such as "along" for "alone," have been corrected. Sibley, in writing about the earlier phases of his career from the perspective of his old age, occasionally fell into error in the matter of dates. These small mistakes may be corrected by comparison with contemporary letters and they cannot be said seriously to impair the general value of the sketch.

THEODORE C. BLEGEN

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ST. PAUL

AUTO-BIOGRAPHY

Commenced Kittrell, N.C. February 22^d 1884

PREFACE

My object in placing upon record my personal history, is simply to leave behind me, for the benefit of my surviving children, and for the gratification of my numerous friends and acquaintances, not only the incidents of my early and mature manhood, eventful and wild as they were, and redolent of adventures, exposures, and dangers, which will be of more or less interest to them, but a narration of events with which I was connected at a later period, immediately preceding, and following the organization of Minnesota as a Territory in 1849, and its admission into the Union as a State in 1858. Whether my life, health, and strength will be spared, to enable me to enter into minute details of my career, or, on the other hand, my physical and mental condition, at any time in the future, shall admonish me to abbreviate my labors, by confining myself to a narrative of the salient, and more important points in my career, time alone can determine. Having entered on my seventy fourth year on the 20th of this month, (February 1884,) I must perform the work as speedily as practicable, for in my case at best, "the night cometh in which no man can work."

I was born in Detroit, Territory of Michigan February 20th 1811. My parents Solomon Sibley, and Sarah Whipple Sibley, had been residents of Detroit since 1804, or 1805.⁵ My father was one of the only two lawyers established there, the other being Elijah Brush father of the late E. A. Brush, who died a few years since, leaving an estate of two or three millions. My father was from Sutton, Worcester County, Massachusetts. The Sibleys were numerous in that town, and the records of the revolution, and of the War of 1812, bear evidence of the voluntary services of many of that name in both of these struggles. Solomon Sibley commanded a Militia Company, when Hull ignominiously surrendered the post of Detroit to the British General Brock, in spite of the indignant protest of all his officers.

My father was elected delegate to Congress from the Territory in 1820-'21, and was afterwards appointed U. S. District Attorney and Judge of the Supreme Court successively, holding the last named office until incapacitated by reason of physical infirmities.⁶ My mother was a noble specimen of a pioneer woman. She was born in Providence, in the State of Rhode Island, and finished her education in a Moravian female Seminary in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Her father was Colonel Ebenezer Sproat a distinguished officer of the continental forces during the revolutionary war, and a member of the Society of Cincinnatus, his diploma, or certificate of membership signed by the President George Washington, being in the possession of the family, and preserved as a valued memorial. Her mother was a daughter of Abraham Whipple the oldest Com-

⁵ It is said that Solomon Sibley was "the first settler to go to Detroit after the evacuation of that post by the British in 1796 as provided in the Jay Treaty." According to Shortridge, the elder Sibley was married in 1802 at Marietta and "took his bride by way of the Ohio river to Pittsburgh, thence to Lake Erie, and then by boat to Detroit." This seems to be correct, but the journey to Michigan was not made immediately after the marriage. Mrs. Elizabeth F. Ellet in a sketch of Mrs. Solomon Sibley states that she was married in October, 1802, but did not go to Detroit until the following spring. Shortridge, *ante*, 3: 116; *The Transition of a Typical Frontier*, 5; Ellet, *Pioneer Women of the West*, 217 (New York, 1852).

⁶ Solomon Sibley served as a delegate to Congress from Michigan Territory from 1820 to 1823 and was chief justice of the Michigan supreme court from 1824 to 1836. Edward M. Barber, "Michigan Men in Congress," in *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, 35: 448.

modore of the revolutionary navy, and noted for his successful daring while in the service. Both of these officers emigrated at the close of the war, with their families, to Marietta, at the mouth of the Muskingum River in the State of Ohio, where they lived until their death. My mother has been made the subject of a special memoir in Mrs. Ellet's interesting history of the "Pioneer Women of the West."⁷

My early youth was in no manner distinguished, unless it was, that I was more given to mischief than my fellows. So many were my exploits in that direction, that my dear mother often declared me incorrigible, and the black sheep of the family. One brother, and one sister were my seniors, and two brothers, and three sisters, younger than myself. Of the eight but three survive, one brother, a sister, and myself, I being several years the oldest. My elder brother Col. E. S. Sibley, graduated at the head of his class at West Point, and remained in the U. S. Army thirty seven years. After having attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Quarter Master's Department, ill health produced by excessive labor in the performance of his duties during the first year of the war of the rebellion, as Deputy Qr. Mr. General in Washington City, compelled his resignation. His long and faithful services to his country, could not secure for him even a place on the Retired List of the Army, General M. C. Meigs, Quarter Master General, persistently refusing to recommend that he be allowed a right which he had well earned, because of the displeasure of the Chief at losing the invaluable aid of his principal assistant.

I was educated in the Academy at Detroit, which was equivalent to the High School of the present day, supplemented by two years tuition in Latin, and Greek, under Rev^d Richard H. Cadle, an Episcopal Minister, and an accomplished classical scholar, and thereafter by the study of law of two years duration. My father intended me to follow his profession, but after the time indicated had elapsed, I frankly told him that the study was irksome to me, and I longed for a more active and stirring life. After long consultations with my mother, they wisely concluded to allow me to follow the bent of my own inclinations, and on the 20th day of

⁷ The pen portrait that Mrs. Ellet draws of "Sarah Sibley" in chapter 12 of her book is that of a woman of rare ability, courage, and charm.

June 1828, being then in my eighteenth year, I left my home never to return to it, except as a transient visitor. My *debut* was in the capacity of clerk to a Mr John Hulbert, who had charge of the sutler's store at the Sault Ste Mary's, the River of that name being the connecting link between Lakes Superior, & Huron. The military post was garrisoned by four companies of the 5th Reg't U.S. Infantry.⁸

Not fancying the occupation, I remained only a few months with Mr. Hulbert, when I was offered, and accepted the position of Agent for Mrs. Johnson, a widow, and mother of the wife of Henry R. Schoolcraft, who was U. S. Indian Agent near the military post, and who is well known to the literary world, for his many contributions to the history of the Indian tribes of the Northwest, as well as to geological science.⁹

Mrs. Johnson's husband had been a quite extensive trader with both whites and Indians, and his widow continued the business after his death. I remained in charge of her affairs during the fall and winter succeeding, and as the family of my employer embraced three educated, and lady-like daughters, the home sickness from which I had previously suffered, was very much alleviated by their company.

In the spring of 1829, having secured a clerkship in John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company at Mackinac, I bade adieu to my kind friends inside, and out, of the garrison, and with half a dozen adventurous young men, embarked on a small schooner, poorly supplied with provisions, and descended the St. Mary's River, until we reached Lake George, a wide expansion of the stream, when to our annoyance and disgust, we encountered a large field of ice in which our frail vessel became firmly imbedded, and where we were detained eight days. Our pork and flour were soon exhausted, and we were only saved from absolute

⁸ This post was Fort Brady. An account of its establishment in 1822 is given in Otto Fowle, *Sault Ste. Marie and its Great Waterway*, 326-332 (New York, 1925).

⁹ The woman whose affairs Sibley took in charge was the daughter of a Chippewa chieftain, Waubojeeg, and the wife of John Johnston, a fur-trader of outstanding ability and character. Mrs. Johnston's son-in-law, Henry R. Schoolcraft, wrote a "Memoir of John Johnston" which has been published in *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, 36: 53-90.

starvation by going ashore, and killing rabbits, of which providentially, there was an abundance. This was my first venture in the hardships, and exposure incident to the wild life upon which I had entered, and it was luxury compared to the privations I was compelled to endure many long years thereafter.

We finally reached Mackinac in safety, although our little craft was sorely tried, and tempest-tossed, on Lake Huron.

Michilimackinac, or Mackinac, as the island is now called, is situated at the entrance of the Straits connecting Lakes Huron & Michigan. It was long the chief entrepot of the fur trade for the country bordering on these Lakes & Lake Superior as well as for the Mississippi valley above Prairie du Chien, and the region watered by the numerous tributaries of that great stream. The whole of this vast area was dominated by the American Fur Company, of which the noted John Jacob Astor of New York City was the head. The capital invested was very large, and the number of traders, clerks, and voyageurs employed in its trade with the numerous tribes of Indians in the northwest, was second only to that of the gigantic Hudson's Bay Company, which controlled the entire British Possessions north of the United States boundary line, a veritable empire in extent.¹⁰

To the central depot at Mackinac, the furs and peltries collected during the winter, were transported by the traders in bark canoes and Mackinac boats, in the months of June and July following, when the usually quiet village was invaded by many hundreds of traders, and voyageurs, arriving from all points of the compass, with their precious freight. There they remained for two months, or more, until the accounts of the principal traders had been settled for the year past, their returns of furs and skins credited to them, and they furnished with the outfit of goods and provisions required for another season's trade, when they departed for their several posts, hundred[s] of miles distant. The period of stay at Mackinac, was a veritable holiday for all the adventurous spirits engaged

¹⁰ The astonishing scope and diversity of the American Fur Company's business are described in Grace Lee Nute, "The Papers of the American Fur Company: A Brief Estimate of their Significance," in the *American Historical Review*, 32: 519-538 (April, 1927). An analysis of this article appears *ante*, 198.

in the traffic with the several tribes of northwestern Indians, and who were self-banished from civilization the greater part of each year. While for the most part, the leading traders, and their clerks were men of more, or less education, and culture, the laborers, or voyageurs, as they were termed, were almost exclusively French Canadians who were divided into two distinct classes, to wit: the "hivernants" or "winterers", who had completed their terms of enlistment of three years, when they were re-engaged at higher wages, and the "mangeurs-de lard," porkeaters, or green-horns, who were held in contempt by the old stagers, and were subjected to many cruel practical jokes by them. These Canadians were especially adapted to the requirements of the fur trade. They were a hardy, cheerful and courageous race, submitting uncomplainingly to labors and exposures, which no other people could have endured. In the winter months, it was their duty to pay periodical visits to the Indian hunting camps scores of miles distant, carrying on their shoulders heavy burdens of goods wherewith to exchange for furs and skins, and to return laden with equal, or greater weights of the latter. Often overtaken by storms in the treeless prairie region, they were compelled to make their beds under the snow, but it seldom happened that any of these voyageurs succumbed to the cold. They were unrivalled as canoe, and boat-men, extremely skilful in their management in the stormy waters of Lakes Huron, Michigan and Superior, and in navigating the numerous rivers, and their tributaries on their way, with valuable cargoes, to the distant interior posts, where the trade with savage bands of Indians was carried on.¹¹ Portages to avoid impassable rapids in many of the minor streams, were required to be made, and the goods, with the frail bark canoes, transported often-times for miles on the shoulders of the voyageurs to the spot, where it was deemed safe to continue the route by water. The labor of bearing these heavy burdens was great beyond conception. The packages of merchandize were, for the sake of con-

¹¹ The *voyageur* was as distinctive and colorful a figure as the lumberjack or the cowboy. A recent writer speaks of him as "the outstanding figure among our makers of folklore" in the upper Mississippi Valley. See Grace Lee Nute, "The Voyageur," *ante*, 6: 155-167. The subject of the *voyageur* is a favorite one with Sibley and is discussed in both of the reminiscent articles cited in footnote 4.

venience, so formed as to weigh about ninety pounds, each one of which was called "a piece".¹² The muscular carriers vied with each [other] in their powers of endurance, and their capacity to transport heavy weights. Two pieces, or one hundred and eighty pounds, were the ordinary charge, the men were expected to carry, but instances were not rare, when individual voyageurs of exceptional strength, and activity, bore three, and even four "pieces" on their backs, for considerable distances without stopping, rivaling in these feats, the famed porters of Constantinople.

Notwithstanding these fearful drafts upon the vital powers, the men as a rule, were merry, good natured, and obedient to the orders of their superiors, and withal long-lived. Leading an existence free from care, their food was simple, & nutritious, and they were debarred from the use of stimulants except tobacco, for ten months in the year. Constant exercise in the open, and pure air of the woods, and prairies, expelled noxious humors from the system, hardened the muscles, and rendered the human machine almost impervious to attacks of disease.

It affords me pleasure to bear witness to the fidelity and honesty of the Canadian French voyageurs. In after years, when at the head of a district, as a partner of the great American Fur Company of New York, comprising the vast region north of Lake Pepin to the British boundary, & west to the streams tributary to the Missouri River, I had within my jurisdiction hundreds of traders, Clerks, and voyageurs, almost all of whom were Canadian French, and I found abundant occasion to prove their honesty and fidelity. In fact, the whole theory of the fur trade was based upon good faith between employers, and employed. Goods, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars, nay millions, were annually entrusted to men, and taken to posts in the Indian Country, more or less remote, with no guarantee of any return except the honor of the individual, and it is creditable to human nature, that these important trusts were seldom, if ever, abused.

Some of the trading stations were so distant, that no communication could be had with them, until the trader made his appearance with his collection of furs and skins, the following

¹² The word is of course an anglicized version of the French *pièce*.

summer, when his returns were credited to his account at the ruling market price for each article, and a general settlement took place. Furs having no fixed value, but subject to the caprices of fashion, the prices of the finer pelts varied from year to year, sometimes higher, and sometimes lower, so that it was impossible to predict what they would bring in the market, and the poor trader would therefore be a prey to doubts, and fears, until his arrival at the main depot at Mackinac. If his best hopes were realized, he was a happy man, and his employés shared in his good fortune. On the other hand, if prices did not realize his expectations, there was a short period of gloom, and disappointment, but the mercurial spirits of all concerned soon asserted themselves, and they prepared for another long exile from civilization, with the *sang froid* peculiar to the race, and with brightened hopes of the future. It sometimes happened that serious losses occurred by shipwreck, in traversing the stormy lakes, by fire, or other casualties, but in such cases, unless occasioned by gross carelessness, an equitable allowance would be made, in the settlement with the Company, by which the latter assumed a portion of the loss. Whatever might be the result of the year's operations, the employés were scrupulously paid the wages they had so well earned.

It may seem strange that men of education, and culture, could be induced to endure the hardships, perils, and exposure, incident to the life of an Indian trader, nevertheless many such could be found among that class. The love of money was not the incentive, for rarely did a trader accumulate, or become wealthy.¹³ There was a peculiar fascination in such a career, which once entered upon, was seldom abandoned. What constituted that fascination, it would be difficult to describe, except upon the theory, that the tendency of civilized man when under no restraint, is towards savagery as the normal condition of the human race. There was a charm in the fact, that in the wild region, inhabited only by savage beasts, and still more savage men, one was liberated from all tram-

¹³ It is doubtless true that the average trader did not become wealthy, but it must not be forgotten that some of the great organizers of the fur trade gained large fortunes. Of these the most conspicuous example is of course John Jacob Astor. Not a few of the lesser figures also won ample financial rewards. It should be added that some of the traders who made handsome fortunes in furs quickly lost them in speculation.

mels of society, independent, and free to act according to his own pleasure. Even the dangers which environed him gave zest to his existence. Moreover, he was regarded by the savages among whom he was thrown, as their superior, their counsellor, and their friend. When sickness prevailed in their families, he prescribed for them, when hungry he fed them, and in all things he identified himself with their interests, and became virtually their leader. What wonder then, that he should exercise so potent an influence with this wild race?

There was a spice of romance in these surroundings, which was attractive. And there was no lack of chivalry in the character of the Indian trader of the olden time. This trait was especially manifested in his dealings with an opposition trader, who having secured a government license, made free to establish himself by the side of him who claimed a prior, and prescriptive right, to all the privileges, and profits, to be derived from the traffic with that particular band of savages. Hostilities were at once inaugurated, which at first, consisted on the part of the new comer, in attempts to seduce the best hunters from their old allegiance, by gifts, and other appliances. So far indeed, was the strife carried, that not unfrequently, there occurred pugilistic encounters between the voyageurs, over the possession of a package of valuable furs. And yet when the principals met, as they frequently interchanged visits socially, no offensive allusion was made to the existing strife, which was looked upon as purely a matter of business. If either party, or his employés, suffered from illness, accident, or other calamity, the tenants of the hostile camp tarried not, but hastened to the rescue, with all the means and appliances at their command. If, as often occurred, the occupants of one post were temporarily straitened for provisions, the scanty larder of their opponents was, as a matter of course, placed at their disposal. All this, while the contest for the possession of the Indian hunters products was fiercely maintained, by the voyageurs attached to each side, and any, and every means resorted to without scruple, to secure the coveted prize. Thus there existed a broad line of demarcation, in the usages of the Indian traders, between the requirements of social life, and the stern demands of business, which was seldom infringed upon.

Upon my arrival at Mackinac, I reported in person to Mr. Robert Stuart, the gentleman in charge of that great central depot, and the trusted Agent of John Jacob Astor, who was in fact the owner, and embodiment, of the American Fur Company.¹⁴ I was cordially received by Mr. Stuart, and informed that the business season would not open, until about the first of June, and I was at liberty to spend the intermediate month as I pleased. I fell in with an old and intimate friend, John Kinzie, a son of an Indian Agent long stationed in Chicago, and was invited to accompany him on a visit to that spot.¹⁵ We embarked on a sail vessel called the "Napoleon", commanded by Captain Chesley Blake, one of the oldest and best sailors on the lakes, and after an uneventful voyage, varied only by short landings at ports on the South shore of Lake Michigan, we reached Chicago, where we remained several days. I found on the present site of the "Queen City of the Lakes", in May 1829, a small stockade constructed for defence against the Indians, but abandoned, and perhaps half a dozen dwellings, occupied by the Beaubien and other families, and a single store stocked with a small, but varied assortment of goods and provisions.¹⁶ A more un-inviting place could hardly be conceived of. There was sand here, there, and every where, with a little occasional shrubbery to relieve the monotony of the landscape. Little did I dream,

¹⁴ Robert Stuart was in charge of the inland headquarters of the American Fur Company at Mackinac from 1817 to 1834. He had migrated to Canada from Scotland in 1805 and five years later, with his uncle David Stuart, joined the Astorians. After the abandonment of the post at the mouth of the Columbia, he returned to New York by the overland route. A "Sketch of the Life of Hon. Robert Stuart" by Charles C. Trowbridge, a contemporary, is printed in *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, 3: 52-65. The Minnesota Historical Society possesses photostatic reproductions of letters in Stuart's letterbooks, now preserved at Mackinac, for the period when Stuart was in charge of the Mackinac headquarters.

¹⁵ John H. Kinzie was the elder of the two sons of John Kinzie, the well-known Chicago trader. He was "at different times in the employ of Robert Stuart of the American Fur Company, secretary to Governor Cass, and sub-Indian agent at Fort Winnebago." Milo M. Quaife, *Chicago and the Old Northwest, 1673-1835*, 361 (Chicago, 1913).

¹⁶ Jean Baptiste Beaubien has been described as perhaps "the most picturesque character in the little group of civilian residents of Chicago in the decade which began with the restoration of Fort Dearborn." Quaife, *Chicago and the Old Northwest*, 278.



HENRY H. SIBLEY IN 1849

[From a photograph in the Sibley House, Mendota.]



that I would live to see on that desolate coast, a magnificent City of more than half a million of inhabitants, almost rivaling metropolitan New York in wealth, and splendor.

Leaving Chicago the "Napoleon" wended its way to the spot, where the beautiful city of Milwaukee now exhibits her fair proportions. There was but one house there, the dwelling of an Indian trader named Solomon Juneau, by whom we were hospitably welcomed, and entertained.¹⁷ It has been a source of surprise to me, that the City of which Juneau the honest old Frenchman, and original inhabitant, was the actual founder, has done little, or nothing, to perpetuate his memory.

Our craft returned to Mackinac without accident, on the 22^d day of May 1829, and I entered upon my duties as office clerk on the first of June following, finding a home in the charming family of Mr. Stuart.¹⁸

I soon found that the position of clerk was no sinecure. For three months or more in each year, he was closely confined to his desk, excepting Sundays, writing twelve or fourteen hours a day. The winter was comparatively, a season of idleness, affording time for social enjoyments, fishing and other amusements.

I was domiciled in this sequestered spot for the most part of five years. In 1832, I was dispatched in a bark canoe with a crew of nine chosen voyageurs, to transact some important business with

¹⁷ Solomon Juneau established himself as a trader on the site of Milwaukee in 1818. As late as 1833 there were but three huts there. In 1834 Juneau joined with Morgan L. Martin "to preempt the land east of Milwaukee River and lay out a town site." Louise P. Kellogg, "The Story of Wisconsin, 1634-1848," in *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 3: 191 (December, 1919); Edwin S. Mack, "The Founding of Milwaukee," in State Historical Society of Wisconsin, *Proceedings*, 1906, p. 195.

¹⁸ Though Sibley is very definite here as to date, there is reason for supposing that the trip described and the entrance upon his new duties at Mackinac occurred in 1830 instead of in 1829. In the Sibley Papers is a letter of recommendation from certain officers of the Bank of Michigan addressed to Robert Stuart and bearing the date April 28, 1830. In it occurs this phrase: "Having understood that our young friend Mr. Henry H. Sibley has some reason to expect employment in the office of your company at Mackinac, we cannot see him depart without availing ourselves of the opportunity to testify to you Sir our respect for his character and talents."

Hon. George B. Porter Governor, and ex-officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Michigan, with headquarters at Detroit. I was furnished with six days rations, which was considered sufficient for the downward trip, and being inexperienced in that direction, I left the supply to the care of the crew, who consumed the whole of it in four days. We encountered a severe storm in crossing Saginaw Bay which few open boats could have safely weathered, but our large, and well built bark canoe skimmed the waves in magnificent style, and we doubled the dreaded "Pointe aux Barques" without accident.

But the night overtook us before we could effect a landing on the iron bound shore, and while we were a full mile or more from the coast, and a heavy swell of the lake prevailing, the canoe settled suddenly upon a submerged rock, making a large hole through the frail bark in the middle of the craft, much to the alarm of myself, and the crew. I thrust my overcoat over the opening, and ordered the steersman to make for the land as speedily as was possible in the darkness. Providentially, we discovered a sand beach, which we reached none too soon, for our vessel was rapidly filling with water.

Having transported our few chattels to the shore, the canoe was speedily emptied, and borne carefully to it on the shoulders of the men, and deposited in a safe resting place. It was then, and there, that I learned the lesson, which stood me in good stead in after years, of not entrusting a scanty stock of provisions, to the custody of careless improvident, and voracious voyageurs. We had, upon investigation, just sufficient bread and pork for supper, and no more. For two whole days and a part of the third, the storm continued with so much violence, that we were completely wind-bound, and during that period we had not a morsel of food, except the bark of trees. We had nearly a hundred miles of the lake to traverse, before reaching a settlement where supplies could be obtained. Meantime, the canoe had been thoroughly repaired, as we had an abundance of bark, gum & other materials for that purpose. On the morning of the third day of our detention, the wind still continued to blow strongly, but hauled a point or two in our favor, and I told the men that although the attempt would be fraught with danger, we might as well perish by drowning, as to

remain and starve to death, and ordered them to prepare for a departure without delay. The preparations were few and speedily made, our canoe launched, and held from injury on the rocks by the men who were up to their waists in water, and every thing being ready, they sprang into their places, and plying their paddles with vigor, we soon gained an offing of two miles or more in the open lake. Having improvised as much of a sail as was prudent to carry in such a storm, the canoe was turned on its course down the lake, the men holding their paddles along the sides so as to prevent lee way as much as possible. Our frail, but noble vessel flew over the tremendous billows like a bird, and we made a run of eighty miles before sunset. The first habitation that met our eyes, was a dwelling situate on the shore of a small stream twelve miles from the lower end of Lake Huron, with a saw mill adjoining. We joyfully entered the mouth of the creek, expecting to obtain what was necessary to satisfy the cravings of ten empty stomachs.

The proprietor met us at the landing, and after salutations had been exchanged, I told him of our starving condition, and of my desire to purchase a supply of provisions sufficient to last us until our arrival at Detroit. To our utter dismay and discomfiture, he replied that he could not afford to sell us a single article of food, that he had to place himself and family upon short rations, as he feared to go to any point below, inasmuch the cholera was raging every where. He gave such fearful accounts of the fatality caused by the pestilence, that I was convinced they were greatly exaggerated. He said that hundreds were dying daily in Detroit, that a steamer which had passed up with a detachment of U. S. soldiers had lost one hundred and twenty of their number after leaving Detroit, that the shores of River St. Clair were lined with dead bodies, and the water so polluted, that the people along the banks of the stream were compelled to go many miles to procure that indispensable article, and he concluded his detail to us hungry men by advising me not to brave inevitable death by continuing our voyage, but to retrace our watery way to Mackinac, with all expedition. I rejoined that such a proceeding was impossible, that I must go to Detroit at all risks, and transact the important business devolved upon me, and I finally prevailed upon him to turn over

to me, six pounds of flour, and a pound [and] a half of pork, for which I paid him a good round price. Not many minutes elapsed before the flour mixed with water in the form of a "galette"¹⁰ or short cake, and the pork cut into thin slices, were upon the fire, and when insufficiently cooked, a fair division was made of the small allowance, speedily disposed of, and thanking the man for his courtesy, we proceeded on our journey.

Fort Gratiot situated near the entrance of the lake, on the shore of the River St. Clair, was at that time garrisoned by two companies of U. S. troops, and as we approached the post, I perceived a sentinel pacing the wharf. I ordered the steersman to go within easy speaking distance, and when sufficiently near, I questioned the man about the condition of things, and he informed me that some fatal cases of cholera had occurred at the post, that the steamer "Henry Clay" bound upwards, with several companies of soldiers under Gen^l Scott, on their way to the scene of the "Black Hawk" war, had lost many of their number, that Detroit was severely scourged, and that there was more or less cholera at nearly every point on the river. Learning from him that no cases had been reported at "Ward's Landing", 25 miles below, I determined to proceed there, and encamp for the night. We reached that place about midnight, and I had some difficulty in persuading a provision-dealer to leave his comfortable couch at that untimely hour, in order to furnish us with the food we were so much in need of. Finally I succeeded, and warning the men that they must indulge sparingly, we retired to rest in the open air, after enjoying the only semblance of a meal we had eaten for more than three days.

The next morning was bright & clear, and after breakfast, I told the men, that as most of them had families to care for, and I had none, I would hire a horse and proceed by land to Detroit, sixty miles distant, and having completed what I had to do there, I would immediately return and rejoin them. That they would thereby escape grave danger. With one accord they protested, that they had accompanied me thus far, and they did not propose I should run any risks which they did not share with me, and they hoped I would not insist on separating from them under any cir-

¹⁰ This is a *voyageur's* term.

cumstances. I yielded to the wishes of the kind-hearted fellows, and at an early hour in the morning, we embarked, and sped rapidly down the River St. Clair, and across the lake of the same name. Not wishing to expose my men to the night air in the City,²⁰ I made the camp at "Grand Marais" seven miles above it, intending to arrive in Detroit at an early hour in the morning, transact my business with Governor Porter, and depart in the afternoon. The mosquitoes were so numerous, our camp being near an extensive marsh, that none of us slept much during the night.

Early in the morning, the voyageurs prepared for a grand entry into the City, by arraying themselves in their best apparel. They donned high crowned hats of same material, with an abundance of tinsel cords, and black plumes, calico shirts of bright tints exactly alike, and broad worsted belts around their waists. Being all fine, athletic fellows they made quite a striking appearance. The canoe had been gaily painted, and on this occasion two large black plumes, and two of bright red of like dimensions adorned the bow, and stern, of our craft respectively. All things being in readiness, we took our several stations, and in a few moments under the impetus of nine paddles wielded by muscular arms, and the inspiration of a Canadian boat song, in the chorus of which all joined, we shot down the current of the grand river of the Straits at almost half railroad speed.

The appearance of a bark canoe of the largest size, with its paraphernalia, manned by a strong crew of hardy voyageurs keeping time with their paddles to the not unmelodious notes of a French boat song, was so unusual, and attractive, that the wharves were crowded with people to witness our progress past the City,

²⁰ The fear of the supposed dangers lurking in the "night air" was widespread before the days of the germ theory of disease. As late as the sixties a professor in one of the reputable medical colleges of the country explained to his students that malaria was caused by certain gases in the air. The presence of these gases "could be detected by exposing starch to the air at night." If "malarial gases were present, the starch would assume a bluish color." Knut Gjerset and Dr. Ludvig Hektoen, "Health Conditions and the Practice of Medicine among the Early Norwegian Settlers, 1825-1865," in Norwegian-American Historical Association, *Studies and Records*, 1: 26 (Minneapolis, 1926).

and as I had previously been informed, that I must report at the quarantine station, we drew up in front of the quay on which the physician's office had been built. The official proved to be a Doctor Whiting, an old friend of my family who had known me from my childhood, and when he came to meet us, I eagerly inquired if all my relatives had escaped the cholera, he replied, Henry, we buried one yesterday, who had fallen a victim. My mind ran over the entire list before I ventured to ask which of the family had been taken away, and I was relieved when he said, it was my grandmother, for she was advanced in years, and although we all loved her dearly, she could not have long been spared to her friends, in the course of nature.

The Doctor informed me further, that the cholera had been quite fatal, but was abating. Returning for a mile, or more, up the stream, an Indian trader named Campan, proffered us the use of a vacant house on the bank of the river, the lot on which it stood being enclosed by a high board fence, affording a safe place for the canoe. We found a cooking stove in the building, and as there was an abundance of wood, the men could not have wished for more comfortable quarters. I provided amply for their physical wants, and after giving strict orders against their rambling, and especially forbidding the use of intoxicating drinks, I wended my way to the house which had been my birth place, and was, of course, warmly received by my parents, brothers, and sisters, who were both surprised, and delighted, at my un-expected appearance among them. My grandmothers remains had been committed to the earth the day previous, and on the same day the body of Elizabeth, the oldest daughter of General Lewis Cass, a highly educated and accomplished lady, who had succumbed to an attack of brain fever, was buried. The two families being on the most intimate terms, deeply sympathized with each other in their affliction. I was fortunate in accomplishing the object of my mission, Governor Porter having readily granted the desired licenses to the Company, and being averse to an exposure of my fellow voyageurs, I spent but one night at my old home, and taking the precaution to cause my men to be examined, lest premonitory symptoms of cholera had developed among them, and securing proper medicines, and an ample store of provisions, we took our

departure for the upper country, and arrived safely at Mackinac. To our great disgust, as we approached the landing, we were warned by an excited crowd, not to attempt to debark under penalty of fine and imprisonment, but to go into quarantine on Round Island, a mile or more away, and remain there until permission was given us by the Trustees of the village, to return. My crew urged me to go on shore, and allow them to fight their way, but I refused, and told them we must not resist the law. So we paddled to the island, expecting to be detained several days, but to our astonishment, the magistrates sent a special messenger for us about sunset of the same day, being probably convinced from our healthy, and vigorous appearance, that there was no danger of cholera from contact with us. Our friends were relieved and delighted at our escape from the perils through which we had passed, as nothing had been heard from us since our departure, and rumors of disaster were rife.

It was quite a relief for me to be selected from among my fellow clerks for the responsible duty of purchasing, during the winters of 1832-3 and 1833-4, the entire supplies of flour, corn, pork, tobacco, and other articles, required for the American Fur Company in its operations for the current year. The aggregate of expenditure for this object was very large, and I was furnished with letters of credit giving me *carte blanche* to draw for funds on New York City. My headquarters were established at Cleveland, Ohio, and I spent the most of the two winters in the saddle, as it was necessary to visit every portion of the State, and a part of Western Pennsylvania, before closing my contracts.²¹ The exercise of horseback riding thousands of miles, was an agreeable change after so long a confinement to an island small in extent, and entirely isolated from the rest of the world during six months of the year. It is a pleasant recollection, that the important trust confided to so young a man as I was, and withal comparatively

²¹ Sibley's work as a supply purchasing agent for the American Fur Company probably deserves more attention than his biographers have accorded it. In a study of "The American Fur Company's Fishing Enterprises on Lake Superior," by Grace Lee Nute, evidence is given that this company was the largest single buyer of "Ohio's butter, cheese, candles, lard, bacon, corn, and flour" in the thirties. *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 12: 502 (March, 1926).

in-experienced in that part of the business, was so well and conscientiously discharged, as to satisfy my superiors, and to pave the way to a position of far greater responsibility, in the distant region of what is now Minnesota.

In the summer of 1834, Mr. John Jacob Astor, whose operations in the fur trade extended to the Pacific coast, sold out his entire interest in the north-west, to a new corporation in New York City, without change of name, of which Ramsey Crooks, the father of our respected fellow citizen, Colonel William Crooks, and for many years one of the trusted, and principal agents of Mr. Astor, was unanimously chosen as President.²² The change in the proprietor-ship was followed by a re-organization of the business in the entire north-west. I had still one year to serve under my contract with the Astor company, but could not be legally, or equitably held as a chattel, to be transferred to a new corporation, without my consent. I had however, been well acquainted with the incoming president Mr. Crooks, and held him in high esteem. I sought him out, and told him frankly, that my parents were strongly opposed to my longer sojourn in what was little better than a wild Indian country, that I had been offered the position of cashier in two banks, one in Detroit, Michigan, and the other in Huron, Ohio, with a liberal salary for so young a man as I was, and while I did not recognize the right of the new company to insist upon my remaining to fulfil the old contract, I preferred out of respect to him as an old friend of my father, and myself, that he would voluntarily release me from my engagement, in consideration thereof I would pay the new corporation \$1000.

Mr. Crooks listened patiently to my appeal, and replied in substance, that he hoped I would not insist upon leaving, that I was just the young man he wanted, to fill the important place of Agent of the Company, having under my exclusive control, a vast area of country, embracing many trading posts, and a small army of traders, clerks and voyageurs. He spoke of the manner in which I had discharged my duties for five years past, in most flattering

²² A compact account of the career of Ramsay Crooks is given in J. Ward Ruckman, "Ramsay Crooks and the Fur Trade of the Northwest," *ante*, 7: 18-31.

terms, and assured me that I should be guaranteed terms that were satisfactory.

It so happened that Hercules L. Dousman, who with Joseph Rolette Senior, had been in charge of the district included in the Upper Mississippi Valley below Lake Pepin, with the country watered by the tributaries of the Great River, for several years, with headquarters at Prairie du Chien, was, when the business change took place, at Mackinac. Although many years older than myself, we had become warmly attached to each other, and the intimate friendship thus formed, continued until his lamented death in 1868. He was eager in advocating the project of Mr. Crooks, of forming a co-partnership consisting of the new American Fur Company, Joseph Rolette, H. L. Dousman and myself, the former to furnish all the capital required, Rolette (nominally) and Dousman, to conduct the fur trade in their old ground, and I to take exclusive management of the trade with the numerous bands of Sioux Indians from and above Lake Pepin to the distant British boundary line, and to the head waters of the numerous tributaries of the upper Missouri River. My friend Dousman depicted in glowing terms the charms of the region which would be allotted to me, if I would give my consent to the proposed arrangement, and knowing how devoted I had been to field sports, he said the plains were covered with buffalo and elk, while the woods abounded with bear, deer and other game animals, and the numerous lakes with aquatic fowl of every variety. I was finally won over by his repeated and persistent appeals, and assented to the agreement, whereby I became for the remainder of my life, a denizen of what is now the magnificent state of Minnesota.²³

It was with no little reluctance, my parents finally yielded to my earnest entreaties, that they would consent to a project which seemed to them fraught with danger to a son, who whatever were his imperfections, they fondly loved. Although I had become of legal age, I would not have done violence to their feelings, by embarking in an enterprise, which must necessarily add nearly

²³ Sibley, in a "Memoir of Hercules L. Dousman," writes, "Colonel Dousman was, therefore, under Providence, chiefly instrumental in linking my destinies with those of Minnesota." *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 3:194.

a thousand miles to the distance which separated us, without their assent previously obtained. The Falls of St. Anthony or rather a point in their immediate vicinity, at the junction of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, was my destined headquarters, to be reached after a long and tedious journey by land and by water. The country was to the general public, "a terra incognita", vast in extent, over which roamed numerous bands of untamed savages, who claimed exclusive ownership, and which was the abode of beasts, scarcely more fierce, and dangerous than themselves.

I departed from Mackinaw for my new home, in a schooner destined for Green Bay, which town we reached about the middle of October 1834, thence I ascended the Fox River to the Portage of the Wisconsin, where I was fortunate enough to board a very small stern wheel steamer, navigated by the two Harris brothers of Galena, which was on the point of leaving for Prairie du Chien. The accomodations for the few passengers the small craft could carry were of the rudest description, and the water so low in the Wisconsin River, that our progress down the tortuous stream with its innumerable sandbars was painfully slow. Our tiny boat seemed to have a strong attraction towards these obstacles, for it would ground at some points a half dozen times in an hour, but there was no difficulty in getting the light vessel back into the channel, the strength of two or three men being sufficient for the purpose. We arrived at Prairie du Chien on the fifth day, and I was cordially welcomed by my partner Col. Dousman and other friends. I remained with them several days, and as I had before me a trip by land of three hundred miles through an unexplored wilderness, it was necessary to make ample provision for any emergency.

I was fortunate enough to fall in with Alexis Bailly Esquire, a gentleman who was in charge of four trading stations, that were within my district, with headquarters at St. Peters, (since called Mendota, or M'dota, signifying in the Dakota or Sioux language, " Meeting of the Waters ", it being situated at the junction of the Mississippi, and Minnesota Rivers.)²⁴ Mr. Bailly's destination

²⁴ Alexis Bailly was Sibley's immediate predecessor in charge of the American Fur Company's business at St. Peter's. He later established himself as a trader at Wabasha, where he died in 1861. Some details con-

being the same with my own, we formed a party of five, each of us being attended by a Canadian voyageur, and at the request of Col. Dousman I took with me a half breed boy named Duncan Campbell, about sixteen years old, who had relatives in the upper country he wished to rejoin. He is still living (1886), on one of the Sioux reservations in Dakota Territory.²⁸

We left Prairie du Chien on the morning of the 30th of October 1834, all mounted, with one led horse, which was used temporarily by an old Winnebago Indian, who was engaged as a guide, and who told us that his camp where he desired to go, was very near the route we must take, and could be reached in four days. We met with a serious mishap in crossing a channel of the Mississippi above Prairie du Chien. We were compelled to swim our horses over by the side of a wooden dug out or canoe, each with a rope around his neck, the other end of which was held by the rider, while the clumsy vessel was propelled by the arms of a sturdy Canadian. My horse was a powerful animal but wild and intractable, and the moment his hind feet touched the bottom of the stream, he commenced a series of leaps which so alarmed the steersman, that he lost his presence of mind, and allowed the canoe to broach to, when it capsized, and precipitated us into deep water. We succeeded however, in making our way to the shore, our clothing and baggage being thoroughly drenched, a very uncomfortable situation to be found in on a cold autumn day. The day was spent in drying our effects, and in securing our horses, and the next morning we pursued our journey.

We travelled industriously for three days, encamping at night in the open air. What was our chagrin to find, on the morning of the fourth day, that during the preceding night, our old savage

cerning Bailly's removal from St. Peter's in 1835 are given in Folwell, Minnesota, 1: 165, and in Major Lawrence Taliaferro's manuscript journals, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society, under the date of June 23, 1835. On the manuscript records left by Bailly, see *post*, note 34.

²⁸ Duncan Campbell was a brother of the better-known Scott Campbell, the interpreter at Fort Snelling, and a son of Archibald Campbell, an early fur-trader. M. M. Hoffmann, "New Light on Old St. Peter's and Early St. Paul," *ante*, 41 and note. It will be noted that in this paragraph Sibley gives evidence that the latter part of his sketch was written in 1886.

guide had decamped, with his keg of whiskey, leaving us to find our way, as best we could, through a wild region utterly un-inhabited, and unknown to any one of the party. We were informed subsequently, that the camp of the Indian was on the Red Cedar river, a branch of the Lower Iowa, and he had led us far to the westward for his own convenience. Luckily, he did not steal the horse, which he could have done with impunity.

With nothing to direct us, but the knowledge of the fact that the course of the Mississippi River, was from north to south, we took up our line of march to the eastward, and two whole days were spent in reaching the banks of the stream. From that point, rapid advance was made, as no other obstacles were encountered, except in crossing the White, *Embarris*,²⁶ and Cannon Rivers, as Indian trails could be followed between the Sioux villages situated along the route.

The only habitation of a white man between Prairie du Chien, and St. Peters, a distance of three hundred miles was near the present town of Wabashaw. It was occupied by an Indian trader named Rocque, who upon our arrival at his door amid the peltings of a pitiless storm, received us with genuine hospitality, and insisted upon our remaining his guests during the night, which invitation was gladly accepted.²⁷ As he was well supplied with *provant*,²⁸ including wild honey, and fresh venison, we fared royally, and the old gentleman provided for us comfortable beds, a luxury of which we had been for several days deprived. To add to our enjoyment, Mr. Rocque had a pretty sixteen years old daughter, who vied with her parents, in endeavors to make our unexpected visit agreeable.

²⁶ The Embarrass River, now known as the Zumbro, appears to have received its earlier name because of the driftwood that obstructed its navigation by canoes. Warren Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names; Their Origin and Historic Significance*, 11 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, volume 17).

²⁷ The trader mentioned was Augustin Rocque or Rock. In the Sibley Papers there is an agreement between Sibley and Louis Massey, dated June 23, 1837, whereby the latter engages himself to carry mail between St. Peter's "and the house of Augustin Rock below Lac Pepin."

²⁸ The word should be *provende*, that is, provisions.

Two days after we arrived at St. Peters, November 7th 1834.²⁹ When I reached the brink of the hill overlooking the surrounding country I was struck with the picturesque beauty of the scene. From that outlook the course of the Mississippi River from the north, suddenly turning eastward to where St. Paul now stands, the Minnesota River from the west, the principal tributary of the main stream, and at the junction, rose the military post of Fort Snelling perched upon a high and commanding point, with its stone walls, and blockhouses, bidding defiance to any attempt at capture by the poorly armed savages, should such be made. There was also visible a wide expanse of prairie in the rear of the Fort. But when I descended into the amphitheater where the hamlet was situated, I was disappointed to find only a group of log huts, the most pretentious of which was the home of my fellow traveller Mr. Bailly, in whose family I became an inmate for the next six months. I was duly introduced to Mrs. Bailly by her husband. She was a handsome, well formed lady, who had received some advantages of education, and I was warmly welcomed by her, and made much more comfortable than the outward appearance of the cabin would indicate. Her father, Mr. John B. Faribault, occupied another of the huts with his family. He was a trader among the Dakota, or Sioux Indians, his post being at Little Rapids on the Minnesota River, about forty miles above its mouth.³⁰ There were dwellings for the blacksmith, carpenter, and common

²⁹ In his "Reminiscences of the Early Days of Minnesota," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 3: 245, Sibley also gives November 7, 1834, as the date of his arrival at St. Peter's, but in this case reminiscence must bow to the evidence in contemporary records, for in a letter written to Ramsay Crooks on November 1, 1834, dated at St. Peter's, Sibley states, "Having been detained some time at Prairie du Chien I did not arrive here until the 28th ult. in company with Mr. Bailly." It is therefore safe to say that Sibley arrived at St. Peter's on October 28, 1834. This correction is also made in Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1: 162 n.

³⁰ Sibley is the author of a "Memoir of Jean Baptiste Faribault," published in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 3: 168-179. Faribault's post was on the south bank of the Minnesota River, in what is now Louisville Township, Scott County. During times of low water, the river drops as much as two feet at this point. Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names*, 511.

voyageurs in the vicinity of Mr. Bailly's quarters, and store-houses for the goods used in the fur trade.

There were stationed at Fort Snelling, about a mile distant from the hamlet, and on the other side of the Minnesota River, four companies of the 5th Regiment U. S. Infantry, commanded by Major Joseph Plympton, and as several of the officers were married, there was a very pleasant society in the garrison. The Indian Agent, Major Lawrence Taliaferro, with his employés, occupied two stone buildings on the outside of the walls of the post.³¹

As I was supplied with introductory letters to several of the officers, as well as to the Agent, I delivered them in person, and was cordially welcomed, introduced to all the ladies in garrison, and was soon domiciled among them. There were a few u[n]married young lieutenants, who had clubbed together, calling themselves the *bote-screw*.³² They were genial, clever fellows, albeit somewhat fast, so much so, that they sometimes perpetrated practical jokes, which brought them fearfully near to penalties for a breach of military discipline. I was duly installed as a member of the club, but was careful to take no part in such antics.

On one occasion, a contractor for post supplies named Peebles, having delivered his stores, and had them successfully inspected, was so elated that he promised the commanding officer, a barrel of ale, as soon as practicable after his return to Pittsburg, his place of residence, and he made the same promise to all of the Officers, giving them to understand the ale was for general distribution among them. In the course of time, the barrel was delivered at the post, having been consigned to Major Plympton individually. The latter, not knowing that the contractor had informed the other officers, that the ale was for the common benefit, caused it to be placed in his own cellar, where it remained for several days. The *bote-screw* meantime became restive at the delay in the division

³¹ Taliaferro, who served as Indian agent at St. Peter's from 1819 to 1840, is one of the most important figures of that period in Minnesota history. His own account of his experiences, written in 1864, is published under the title "Auto-biography of Maj. Lawrence Taliaferro," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 6: 189-255. An important recent study is "Major Lawrence Taliaferro, Indian Agent," by Willoughby M. Babcock, in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 11: 358-375 (December, 1924).

³² One suspects that this curious name is derived from "boat's crew."

of the coveted liquor, and after consultation with each other, they despatched a soldier with a note, and large pitcher, requesting the commanding officer to have the vessel filled for their use. I need not say, that this impudent proceeding was resented by the Major, who threatened the arrest, and trial by court martial of all concerned, and they only escaped by making ample apologies, and explanations. The contractor never made his appearance at the post afterwards, nor would it have been safe for him to do so.

The winter of 1834-5, was remarkable for its length & severity. The snow was deep, necessitating the employment of snow shoes, and the supply of hay & grain for cattle proved insufficient, and a great mortality among the animals at the military post, and in the vicinity, was the result. Having little business to attend to during the season, my time was spent in reading, and in visiting the Fort. The game of chess was the favorite amusement in garrison, officers and ladies participating, and it served as a useful pastime in the long evenings. Brevet Lieut Colonel Gustavus Loomis was one of the officers stationed at the Fort. He had a charming family, with whom I became quite intimate. His daughter subsequently became the wife of Lieutenant, and A. A. Quarter Master, U.S.A. E. A. Ogden who was a particular friend of mine, and who was born the same day with myself. He died of cholera several years afterwards while engaged in the construction of a military post on the Republican Fork of the Platte River. He was a devout Christian, and he fell a victim to his devotion to the sick soldiers who were stationed at that point, leaving a widow and six children, who were fortunately absent on a visit to her parents.³³

The spring following was a late one, and it was near the end of March before the migratory aquatic fowls began to make their appearance. I shouldered my trusty rifle one pleasant morning,

³³ Major Loomis is said to have "had his peculiarities, chief among which was an engrossing enthusiasm in the cause of religion." During the winter of 1833-34 he "got up a red-hot revival among the soldiers," and one of his converts was Lieutenant Ogden. A sketch of Ogden appears in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 1: 437 n. See also John H. Bliss, "Reminiscences of Fort Snelling," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 6: 343; and Marcus L. Hansen, *Old Fort Snelling, 1819-1858*, 156, 166 (Iowa City, Iowa, 1918).

and in company with Mr. Bailly wended my way along the bank of the Minnesota River, with no other object in view than much needed exercise. We had not proceeded far, before the unexpected "honk" of a gander attracted our attention, and we saw in the distance a flock of five wild geese, the first that had been seen. Hastily concealing ourselves in the bushes, on the shore of a lake situated between the River and the bluff, we imitated the peculiar cry of the gander so perfectly, that the flock, after making a long detour over Fort Snelling returned, and began to circle around the lake, descending lower and lower, until they alighted on the ice in the center of the body of water, and at least two hundred and fifty yards from the spot where we laid in ambush. I remarked *Sotto voce* to my companion, that the distance was too great to ensure a certain shot, but as there was no way of nearer approach without alarming the keen-eyed bipeds, I would do the best I could in the premises. I took a careful aim at the head of the leader, a huge gander, believing that the ball would be depressed in traversing so long a line of sight, and might possibly strike the body of the fowl. What was our delight when [at] the crack of the rifle, the bird fell with a heavy thud upon the frozen surface, and the rest of the flock took refuge in flight. We tried to beguile them with plaintive goose appeals, but without effect. They could not be persuaded to come back, to ascertain the fate of their unfortunate comrade, whose head had been neatly severed from his body.

The question now presented itself, as to the ways and means, to be taken to secure our coveted prize. The ice was so far affected by the thawing weather, that while it would bear the weight of a goose, it would be very unsafe for a full grown man to trust himself upon it. Nevertheless, the game must not be abandoned. I found a pine board among the drift wood on the shore, and contrary to Mr. Bailly's protests, I started for the victim of my rifle, using the board as necessity required. I broke through several times, but persevered, and after a long and fatiguing experience, I brought the game triumphantly to the dry land, at the cost of a complete immersion in the cold water.

This episode would not, under ordinary circumstances, have been worth recording, but the fact was, that for months we had

to diet on salt pork, and bread, rarely having fresh meat on the table, consequently, the addition to our larder of a huge fat goose occasioned a general rejoicing in the family of Mr. Bailly, and was worthy of commemoration.

As the season advanced, ducks, and geese became abundant in the lakes back of Mendota, and I hunted them industriously. On one occasion, I placed myself between two small lakes, and ere long a large flock of ducks flew across the intervening space. I emptied the contents of both barrels of my gun among them, and at the same instant, a Sioux Indian, concealed in the undergrowth within a few yards of me without any idea on my part of his proximity, discharged his single barrel at them also. What was my surprise, to see the impudent savage stride over to where eight dead ducks laid on the ground, and incontinently thrust the head of each through his belt, with a grin of satisfaction. I finished the loading of my gun, and then walked deliberately to the place where the Indian stood, took the game, one by one, from his belt, and attached them to my own. He looked astounded at my action, and as I could not then speak a word of Sioux, and he no English, I could only explain the situation, by signs denoting that if he had been satisfied with two ducks, I would not have objected, but as he was so glutinous as to appropriate the whole number, he should have none. As I was doubly armed, he offered no resistance, but when I became well acquainted with the individual in after years, after I had acquired some knowledge of the Sioux language, and could make myself understood on common topics, it pleased me to hold him up to the other Indians, as without doubt, the best specimen of a porcine, in human form, I had ever encountered.

During the winter, I had arranged with Mr. Bailly to purchase his entire interest in the fur trade at the four posts I have before mentioned, and in May he departed from Mendota with his family, and established himself below Lake Pepin on the site of the present town of Wabasha. My relations with Mr. and Mrs. Bailly during the six months I boarded with them, had been so uniformly pleasant, and they had both exerted themselves so constantly, to make my sojourn with them agreeable, that I did not part from them without a feeling of deep regret. Mrs. Bailly who was

of delicate constitution, did not live long after her change of residence, and two or three years subsequent to her death, Mr. Bailly was united to a Miss Corey, formerly of Cooperstown, N. Y., by whom he had three or four children. He died at Wabasha many years since; and his widow is still living in this City.³⁴

It was decidedly a novel and awkward undertaking for me, to form a bachelor's establishment, but I succeeded after a fashion, with the aid of a mulatto man named Joe Robinson, who could cook plain food moderately well, but who proved himself to be not only wasteful, but withal not entirely cleanly in his methods, for which faults I was compelled to reprimand him frequently, and severely. There being no hotel, or other accomodations for travellers, I was the host necessarily, of not only the many who bore letters of introduction to me, but of all of genteel appearance, whose wandering propensities led them to visit this distant region, so that I had to provide food, and lodging, such as they were, very frequently for fifteen or twenty men at a time. As no charge was ever made, some of these strangers would prolong their stay much longer than good manners, not to say decency, would dictate, some instances of which will be given hereafter.

In 1835, I commenced the construction of a spacious stone warehouse, which was completed the following year, and added greatly to the facilities for transacting business not only, but to the accomodations for lodging my numerous guests. I then proceeded to erect a substantial and commodious stone dwelling, which still stands, as the first and oldest private residence, in all of Minnesota, and Dakota.

At the time of which I write, there was not a permanent white settler in all of this immense region, the only persons of that complexion here, consisting of the garrison at Fort Snelling, the attaches of the Indian Agency, those engaged in the fur trade, and the tenants of a small group of huts near the walls of the Fort,

³⁴ A considerable collection of the papers of Alexis Bailly is now available for study in the manuscript division of the Minnesota Historical Society, and the society also has some of the letters of Mrs. Bailly and of her sisters, Phoebe Frances Cory, Mrs. William Forbes, and Mrs. Louis Blum. Accounts of these two groups of papers are published *ante*, 6:72 and 7:180.

who had been driven from the British settlements on the Red River, by floods, and other calamities, and had been permitted by the commandant, who pitied their distressed condition, to locate temporarily under the guns of the post, for protection.²⁵

In the fall of 1835, I started with but one of my voyageurs, both of us being mounted, to visit and inspect the trading posts, established at long distances from each other. When obliged to encamp in the prairie, intervening between the stations, as was frequently the case, we had to depend upon our guns for food, but game was so abundant that we were able to procure an ample supply. Our route led us through villages of the different bands of Dakota, or Sioux Indians, by all of whom we were hospitably received, as they had been advised by their traders, that a new man was at the head of the fur trade in the whole of their country, and would doubtless soon make his appearance, on his way to inspect the trading posts. There was a general desire on the part of the red men, women and children, to see the stranger, who occupied a position which in their eyes, was a very exalted one.

The last trading post visited, was situated on the bank of Lake Travers, near the source of the Minnesota River, and of the dividing ridge separating the streams debouching into the Red River of the north, from those flowing south into the Gulf of Mexico. The bands of Indians who habitually came to this point, to exchange buffalo robes, and the skins of other animals, for articles they needed for use or ornament, were of a wild and quarrelsome character, so that the buildings were enclosed in a stockade of high, and substantial oak pickets, with port holes for musketry, and blockhouses at the angles, constituting a formidable defence against savages. The Indians were not allowed to enter this enclosure, except when the chiefs, or headmen, to the number of three or four, asked for admittance, the trading being done through an opening in the massive doors, which was promptly closed after business had ceased for the day. The clerk I had

²⁵ The migration in the twenties from the Red River country to Fort Snelling is dealt with in Mrs. Ann Adams' interesting reminiscences, "Early Days at Red River Settlement, and Fort Snelling," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 6:75-115. The article by M. M. Hoffman, *ante*, 27-51, presents a detailed study of the Catholic element in the population of St. Peter's and St. Paul in the late thirties.

placed in charge of this important depot, was no less a personage than Major Joseph R. Brown, who subsequently became justly prominent in Minnesota history, when the territorial organization was effected, and in full operation. Mention will be made of him hereafter in this work.²⁶

A sad accident occurred during my stay, which narrowly escaped being fatal to a pretty Indian girl. Several of us were engaged in pistol shooting at a mark, Joseph Renville the trader at Lac qui Parle, being present, and of the number.²⁷ He was practising with a fine pair of duelling pistols, furnished with hair triggers, which were the gift to him of a British officer with whom he had become acquainted. When his turn to fire came, he had set the hair trigger of the pistol, and being unaccustomed to so delicate an arm, he unfortunately touched the trigger before taking aim, and the pistol was discharged, sending its missile into a group of women & children, who were assembled to witness the sport. The report was followed by a piercing shriek from the sixteen year old girl, and she was seized by the older women, and placed on a bed in the nearest building. I followed to ascertain the extent of the injury inflicted, and found the bed surrounded by wailing females, who were doing nothing for the sufferer. I pushed them rudely aside, for it was no time for ceremony, and found that the girl had been shot in the groin, the ball passing through that portion of the body. I was soon satisfied that no artery, or other important blood vessel had been severed, as there was but little hemorrhage from the wound. My limited knowledge of surgery would not permit of a further diagnosis, but I feared that inflammation might supervene, and prove fatal to the patient. Knowing that Doctor Williamson, a missionary, and physician of repute, was at Lac qui Parle, sixty miles distant, I suggested to Renville, an instant departure for that post, with a view of procuring his aid as soon

²⁶ Unfortunately this promise was not carried out by Sibley. Much light is thrown on the career of Brown in volume 3 of Dr. Folwell's *Minnesota*, especially in the appendix, no. 3, p. 347-357. See also a "Memoir of Joseph R. Brown" in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 3: 201-212.

²⁷ A general account of this important trader is given in Edward D. Neill, "A Sketch of Joseph Renville: A 'Bois Brule,' and Early Trader of Minnesota," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 1: 157-165.

as possible.³⁸ We forthwith started, after prescribing the application of cold water to the injured parts, and rode rapidly with a hope of reaching Lac qui Parle some time during the night. But we were overtaken by a fearful wind, and rain storm, after having accomplished about half the route, and the night was so dark, that we could not follow in the proper direction, and were forced to lie down in the prairie, at the crossing of the Pomme de Terre River, exposed to the peltings of the tempests until dawn. On arriving at the station, we hastened the departure of the Doctor, who willingly complied with our urgent request, and I continued on my homeward way. I was rejoiced to learn, subsequently, from Dr Williamson, that the girl was doing well, and all dangerous symptoms had disappeared. She entirely recovered, and eventually became the lawful wife of Major Brown, by whom she had a number of children, some of whom are yet living, as is the woman herself.

We were overtaken by a driving snow storm in the wide prairie, the day after our departure from Lac qui Parle, and were glad to find partial shelter in a small grove of poplars, where we spent a day, and two comfortless nights, being poorly prepared for such premature winter experience. We reached Mendota safely, and without further adventure.

It was the custom in those days, to leave the doors of all buildings unlocked, save only those of the stores where goods and provisions were kept, and I was lying in bed in the log house, shortly after my return from the long trip, engaged in reading, when about midnight, a male, and female Indian, entered very much to my

³⁸ Dr. Thomas S. Williamson, a Presbyterian who received his medical training at Yale College, was sent to Minnesota as a missionary to the Sioux in 1835 by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The station at Lac qui Parle, one of several established in Minnesota by Williamson, was opened in the summer of 1835. The Minnesota Historical Society possesses copies of numerous letters by Williamson to the American Board detailing his missionary experiences. See *ante*, 6: 203, 292. A brief summary of his career, with references to printed sources, appears in Warren Upham and Rose B. Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies, 1655-1912*, 863 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, volume 14); and a general survey of "Early Indian Missions" in Minnesota is made in Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1: 170-212.

surprise. I had mastered enough of the Sioux tongue to understand the purport of common conversation, and I asked the man what had brought him to my room at that untimely hour? He took his companion by the hand, and led her to my bedside, and I recognized in her the young, and good looking daughter of the Indian before me, who was a sub-chief of one of the lower bands. He commenced by saying, that he was about to depart to make his winter hunt, many days march away, and would not return until late in the spring, and as he did not wish to expose his young daughter to hardship & suffering, he had decided to ask me to take her in charge. The poor girl meantime, stood there awaiting my reply, having covered her head with the blanket she wore. I excused myself to the father, telling him it would be wrong in me to comply with his offer, that I had no intention of taking to myself an Indian maiden for a wife, for many reasons I could not explain to him, except one which he could comprehend, and that was, it would make the other Indians, and their families, dissatisfied and jealous. He was obliged to submit to my categorical negative to his proposition, and retired with his youthful progeny, both of them disappointed, and mortified, at the ill success of their mission. It must not be supposed, that from an Indian point of view, there was any thing savoring of immodesty in the proceeding I have narrated. It was considered a laudable ambition on the part of a Sioux girl, to capture a respectable white man, and become his wife without any legal ceremony, but the connection was regarded as equally obligatory on both parties, and in many cases ended only with the death of one of them. I shall have more to write on this subject farther on, when I will demonstrate, that female virtue was held in as high estimation among the Sioux bands in their wild state, as by the whites, and the line between the chaste, and the *demi-monde*, quite as well defined.

DANISH SETTLEMENT IN MINNESOTA

The prophecy by Fredrika Bremer of Minnesota as a new Scandinavia has long since come true.¹ All the five Scandinavian groups — the Swedes, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Finns, and the Icelanders — have settlements there.² Minnesota is today the state having the largest number of citizens of Scandinavian descent, — about seven hundred thousand, — of whom nearly fifty thousand are of Danish blood.³

Danish immigration to Minnesota began even before its organization as a territory. One of the first and most prominent bankers of St. Paul in the forties and fifties was Dr. Charles W. Borup, a native of Denmark who had come to St. Paul in 1848. Writing of him in 1851, Miss Bremer says:

I have become acquainted with a Danish merchant, resident here, who has made a considerable fortune in a few years in the fur trade with the Indians, and who has built himself a large and handsome country house at some little distance from the city. His wife, who is the daughter of an Indian woman by a white man, has the dark Indian eye, and features not unlike those of the Feather-cloud woman [*a fair Indian woman among the Sioux whom Miss Bremer visited*] and in other respects is as much a gentlewoman as any agreeable white lady. I promised this kind Dane, who retains the perfect Danish characteristics in the midst of Americans, that I would, on my return, in passing through Copenhagen, pay a visit to his old mother, and convey to her his greeting.

At the time of Dr. Borup's death in 1859 he was one of the "wealthiest citizens" of St. Paul.⁴

¹ Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World; Impressions of America*, 2: 55-58 (New York, 1853).

² Culturally, at least, the Finns are essentially Scandinavian, and Mary W. Williams, in *Social Scandinavia in the Viking Age*, 12 (New York, 1920), suggests that they are probably racially akin to the Teutons or Nordics as well.

³ *United States Census, 1920, Population*, 2: 973.

⁴ Bremer, *Homes of the New World*, 2: 58; J. Fletcher Williams, *A History of the City of Saint Paul, and of the County of Ramsey, Minne-*

The United States census reports for 1860 show that there were thousands of Swedes and Norwegians in Minnesota, but there were less than two hundred Danes. The heaviest immigration from Denmark began in the late sixties and continued during the next three decades. A large number of the early immigrants had been agricultural laborers and small farmers in the old country. Many of them brought their families with them. Toward the close of the century and up to the time of the World War, a large number of the Danish immigrants were mechanics. Most of the later comers were unmarried men and women who went to the cities rather than to the country. It was the earlier immigrants who founded the rural settlements.

Practically all of both the earlier and later immigrants could read and write and some had attended folk high schools, a kind of secondary school managed frequently by clergymen. Only a very limited number had had a higher education, since only the well-to-do or specially gifted could afford such training in the fatherland. If occasionally there was a black sheep among the immigrants or "one who had done something," it is also true that even they sometimes made good. When the Danish immigrant arrived in the North Star State he was usually in good health, rosy-cheeked, wearing homespun clothing, perhaps, but rarely wooden shoes. Economically, he had been schooled to do such light but tiresome tasks as herding cattle from the age of eight or ten and attending to the

sota, 390 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 4). Before settling in Minnesota Borup had been a prominent fur-trader at Yellow Lake and La Pointe, in what is now northern Wisconsin. In 1854 he established the banking house of Borup and Oakes in St. Paul. Some of his activities as a frontier doctor during his fur-trading days are discussed in a sketch entitled "Dr. Charles W. Borup: An Up-to-date Wilderness Physician," *ante*, 7:150. A great many of his letters are included in the American Fur Company Papers, photostatic copies of which are in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

ordinary duties indoors or outdoors, according to sex, from the age of fourteen.⁵

The Danish immigrants in Minnesota represented practically every part of Denmark—the larger islands, Seeland (*Sjælland*), Funen (*Fyn*), Lolland, Falster, and the peninsula of Jutland, as well as the smaller islands. In Denmark they had spoken different dialects in their homes and communities; but all had also learned the national Danish in the schools. A change in the mother tongue took place in the American settlements, where several dialects were frequently represented. In addition to the usual admixture of some English words, the immigrants tended in their daily speech to approach the national Danish more than at home. Among the Danes in Freeborn and Steele counties, however, the Vendelbo dialect has been maintained to the present time.⁶

Religiously, most of the Danes had been Lutherans of either one of two types, if they had been active Christians at home. These types were the Inner Mission People—not unlike the German Pietists—and the Grundtvigians, a nationalistic kind of Lutheran to whom an idealized Denmark seemed but little less delectable than heaven itself.⁷ Among the earlier immigrants were also a number of Baptists, who had suffered under

⁵ Chapter on "Danish Emigration to the United States," in the author's manuscript "History of the Danes in Iowa," in the possession of the State Historical Society of Iowa; Soren J. M. P. Fogdall, *Danish-American Diplomacy, 1776-1920, 162-166* (Iowa City, Iowa, 1922); Edward A. Ross, "The Scandinavians in America," in *The Century*, 88: 291-298 (June, 1914); "Immigration into the United States, Showing Number, Nationality, Sex, Age, Occupation, Destination, Etc. from 1820 to 1903," in Treasury Department, Bureau of Statistics, *Monthly Summary of Commerce and Finance of the United States*, 4345, 4347 (June, 1903). This is published also as 57 Congress, 2 session, *House Executive Documents*, no. 15, pt. 12 (serial 4481).

⁶ From the author's observations.

⁷ See, for instance, Bishop N. F. S. Grundtvig's poem "Paradiis," written in 1842—a program for social reformers.

a petty persecution at home, and a few Methodists and Adventists.*

The latter were, so far as the Danes are concerned, a product of conditions in the early days of the settlements when there were frequently no ordained Lutheran ministers but only zealous lay preachers who eagerly seized the opportunity to become leaders and to study the Scriptures without state-prescribed supervision. They may have helped the pioneers to do some necessary original thinking in matters of the spirit. Unfortunately they could direct their followers to but a very limited amount of data on which to exercise their thoughts. And to the orthodox Lutheran ministers they simply created "a sinful confusion" wherever their ideas took root.⁹

Independent in other things, the Danish pioneers in Minnesota were independent in settling, for instead of collecting at a few places under efficient leadership they scattered widely. The large settlement in Freeborn County, however, owed much to its early leader, Reverend Lars Jørgensen Hauge, who directed a considerable number of Baptists to this part of the state in the sixties and seventies.

Hauge was born on the Danish island of Funen. He was so precocious a lad that the bishop of the island suggested that he be educated at the expense of the state. During his boyhood the Baptists and other dissenters were beginning to establish churches in Denmark, and young Hauge became a Baptist. In 1858 he emigrated to Wisconsin, where there was already a small congregation of Danish Baptists. Soon Hauge was one of their most active preachers and evangelists, working intensely and traveling widely in the interest of his church.

* Frederik Barfod, *Fortællinger af fædrelandets historie*, 2:421 (Copenhagen, 1874). An excellent account of the early Baptist congregations may be found in William Gammel, *History of American Baptist Missions in Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America*, 278-298 (Boston, 1849).

⁹ P. Jensen, *Minder gennem halvfjerdssindstyve aar*, 79-90 (Cedar Falls, Iowa, 1920); N. S. Lawdahl, *De danske baptister historie i Amerika*, 154, 164 (Morgan Park, Illinois, 1909).

He married in 1863, and with his young bride and other Danes he set out in the same year from Raymond, Racine County, Wisconsin, for western Minnesota by ox team. On the way these immigrants were warned against settling so near the region where Sioux tomahawks had recently been at work. To all such warnings the young zealot, anxious to scatter the pure seed of the Baptist faith as well as to find suitable lands for settlement, turned "the deaf ear." The immigrants pushed across the Mississippi but did not go far to the west. Instead, they located near Lake Geneva in Freeborn County, where they met a few other Danish families, which had come the same year from Waushara County, Wisconsin.

Hauge made trips to Raymond both in 1863 and 1864, each time bringing back more settlers, and he wrote a small pamphlet about the Danes in the United States which was published in Copenhagen. This auspicious start was to end abruptly. Hauge studied the Scriptures diligently and soon came to the conclusion that evangelical Christians should observe the Sabbath on Saturday rather than Sunday. In this he met opposition from his congregation and a fight, not figuratively speaking, was at one time imminent in the little log church. We can understand that the ire of this earnest preacher was aroused when his parishioners accused him of heresy, this man who had crossed both water and land to preach the gospel unadulterated. Though Hauge remained in the settlement for some time laboring both for its material and spiritual welfare, — he was an ardent advocate of dairying, — his influence was broken and he spent the greater part of the remainder of his long life as a free-lance missionary among the Sioux Indians. He retained his interest in the Danish immigrants, however, and in time became reconciled to his former Baptist brethren.

The settlers bought land, in some instances slightly improved, and made dugouts or built tiny wooden houses. Some of the land had to be cleared by grubbing out the burr oaks before breaking, a Herculean task performed with an

immense breaking plow drawn by several teams of oxen. Wheat was the first main crop and it yielded well, but there was little prosperity until the settlers turned to more diversified farming. In the eighties dairying was agitated. Visitors to Denmark told of the encouraging changes there wrought by the creameries, and dairy farmers in such states as Iowa had already accomplished results worthy of imitation. Finally in 1890 the Clark's Grove farmers built a creamery at the cross-roads near the center of the settlement. It was operated on the coöperative plan with which the settlers had been familiar in Denmark and which already had been put into practice in the Bath Farmers' Insurance Association, organized in 1877.

Around the creamery a little town grew up, and this gradually became the social center of the settlement, though the first churches were not built there. It was called Clark's Grove after an early postmaster, J. M. Clark, whose farm buildings were located in a grove; hence the name of the post office, town, and settlement. Though the name was not of Danish origin, it became endeared to the people. When a railroad tapped the settlement, the company wanted to change the name; the track ran through Clark's Grove, but the depot was built a mile south of the town. The people refused to patronize the road, whereupon the depot was moved to Clark's Grove and named James. But the residents continued to call their town by the old name, rich in its associations with pioneer days, and finally it was accepted by the railroad company.¹⁰

The general economic progress of the settlement may be gauged by its church-building activities. The first church, a log building erected in 1866, served the congregation until

¹⁰ Lawdahl, *Danske baptister*, 146-161; *Danske i Amerika*, 1: 186-191, 271; 2: 271-286 (Minneapolis and Chicago, 1908-18). This two-volume work is brimful of information about Danish-American personalities and affairs. Dr. P. S. Vig of Dana College, Blair, Nebraska, is the chief contributor. Ministers, teachers, editors, farmers, and laborers have contributed to this unique but rather uncritical work. A valuable source on the history of Clark's Grove is the register of the First Danish Baptist Church, preserved in its archives.

1873, when a new frame church was built on a new site. This structure was enlarged in 1894 and continued in use until 1916, when a few of the old pioneers and many of their children and children's children dedicated the present church, built on the hill near the creamery at a cost of about twenty-two thousand dollars.¹¹

The pioneers exercised a strict church discipline — a kind unknown to Danes in the mother country and inspired by the general Baptist ideals of the nineteenth century. A few items from the old church registers will illustrate this discipline and the spirit of the pioneers better than any general account could do. Soon after the organization of the church in 1863 members were forbidden to cut timber on land not belonging to them. In 1864 it was decided by the church that "no brothers should be permitted to travel on Sundays, and if any were on a longer journey and not able to reach home or some other place where there was divine service they were to remain where they were." In 1865 "four members were expelled for having worked on the Lord's Day." In 1873 "a matter concerning M. J., who had married an unbeliever, was debated several hours. It closed with a vote of six to one in favor of her expulsion." The items for 1873 mention discussions about how to discourage vanity and whether it is preferable to have the marriage ceremony performed in the church or by the civil authority. Naturally there was a preference for the church.

The following item from the church register is dated 1875: "O. S. rose and stated that his daughter had become engaged to an unbelieving young man. It was unanimously decided that those who married outsiders would be expelled and also

¹¹ A. W. Warren, *A Brief Historical Sketch of the First Danish Baptist Church, Clarks Grove, Minnesota, 13-17* (Clark's Grove, 1923); *Dannevirke*, January 26, 1916. A complete file of this Grundtvigian weekly, published at Cedar Falls, Iowa, is in the possession of its editor, Mr. M. Holst; the Minnesota Historical Society has a file which begins with the issue of March 20, 1918.

that young people when joining the church be told that it did not permit engagements or marriages with outsiders." Nevertheless, an item for the next year runs: "After much regrettable discussion in the matter of K. S. [who apparently had married the "unbelieving young man"], the majority decided to let her remain in the church." The matter, however, was not yet closed for later in the year the church "agreed that it was wicked for a believer to marry an unbeliever and that the church reserved the right to act according to circumstances." And the next year the church decided that "it was desirable that everybody who became engaged should notify the church of the fact." Notwithstanding this action, the register for the next year reveals the fact that M. N. had married an unbeliever. Again the question of such marriages was warmly discussed and resort was had to prayer, but no disciplinary action was taken.

The church disciplined a member in 1877, however, for not having partaken of the Lord's Supper and another for dishonesty in a wheat deal. In 1882 the church voted that it was sinful and wicked to drink intoxicating liquors. Grape juice was then used for the Eucharist. But this prohibition did not extend to the delicious home-made beer which the Danish housewives, following old country customs, continued to make in America, and without which the men thought it well-nigh impossible to endure the hard work during haying and harvest. In 1899 the church took an action that may seem cruel to youngsters of a later day: it forbade its young people to play ball. The wish was recorded the same year that something should be done about "the young brothers who are not able to be quiet during the sermon." In 1890 a rumor was reported during a church meeting that a member had been guilty of playing cards. And in 1892 a member was expelled for having traded on a Sunday at the store in the near-by village of Geneva.¹²

¹² Register of the First Danish Baptist Church of Clark's Grove, 1863 to 1900.

Those who in our day and generation may be prone to smile at such intermeddling in personal matters, should remember that these earnest Danish pioneers also decided in 1890, when they completed their coöperative creamery, that no milk should be received on Sundays, and that this accordingly became the custom generally throughout Minnesota. This meant more of a holiday for the young people, though perhaps not in the sense that these latter-day Puritans thought of it. But they, too, may have built better than they knew.¹³

Let it also be remembered that these hardy pioneers at one of their few social gatherings, which took place each year on the Fourth of July at the Narrows,—a strait connecting the two parts of Lake Geneva,—took up generous collections for the benefit of needy brothers and sisters of the faith in the fatherland. The first collection for this purpose was taken in 1882 and the custom has been continued down to the present time.¹⁴

Immigration to the Clark's Grove settlement continued during the seventies and eighties but fell off in the nineties. During the latter decade, however, many newcomers went to the vicinity of Geneva, north of Clark's Grove. At the close of the century northern Freeborn County and southern Steele County contained the largest Danish settlement in Minnesota. Most of the immigrants lived in the country, but many were found in the villages and towns of Alden, Albert Lea, Geneva, Blooming Prairie, and Owatonna. Not all were Baptists. The Inner Mission People generally prevailed north of Geneva and the Grundtvigians near Alden. Danes had also settled among the Norwegians in Goodhue, Houston, Fillmore, and Mower counties.¹⁵ The presence of the Danish minister, Claus Laurits Clausen, at Austin after 1878 also tended to draw Danish

¹³ *Danske i Amerika*, 2: 281.

¹⁴ Register of the First Danish Baptist Church of Clark's Grove.

¹⁵ The first Norwegian settlement in Minnesota was established in Fillmore County in 1851. Martin Ulvestad, *Nordmændene i Amerika, deres historie og rekord*, 496 (Minneapolis, 1907).

immigrants to the southeastern part of Minnesota. Clausen, though a Dane, did his ministerial work mainly among the Norwegians, but his nationality and his general concern for the Danish immigrants made him one of the outstanding characters of early Danish-American history.¹⁶

The general trend of the Danish pioneers in Minnesota was toward the north and the west. Before 1870 they were found in most of the counties in the state. In 1880 Freeborn County ranked first in the number of Danish-born residents; Steele, second; Brown, third; and Hennepin, with the city of Minneapolis, fourth. Otter Tail, Olmsted, Ramsey, and Mower each had over two hundred.¹⁷

Soon after the Danish pioneers established the Clark's Grove settlement, other Wisconsin Danes located near Sleepy Eye in Brown County. The first Danes arrived there in 1866 by way of Clark's Grove. The following year more settlers arrived in Brown County from Wisconsin and others from Clark's Grove. There was also considerable immigration direct from Denmark. Among the latter were a mother and her two grown children who took up three homesteads about eight miles from the village of Sleepy Eye. The father had become ill on the voyage from Denmark and had later died and been buried in Mankato. The three survivors built three sod houses, the largest of which, on the mother's land, could easily accommodate not only the family of homesteaders but also their cows and oxen. They planted trees and laid out a garden with flowers and vegetables which became the wonder and delight of many a passer-by. Within the humble sod house might have been seen Danish copper utensils that had been brought along from Denmark, for these people were well-to-do farmers before their emigration. Pioneering was hard. The mother did not live long enough on her homestead to obtain the title to it nor

¹⁶ A good short biography of "Pastor C. L. Clausen," by Svein Strand, is published in *Symra*, 9: 204-223 (Decorah, Iowa, 1913).

¹⁷ *United States Census, 1870, Population, 360; 1880, Population, 1: 515.*

to see her son drive horses as she had hoped, but her remains were drawn to the grave by the first horses that he owned. The daughter married Lars Walthers in 1874. She and her husband continued to live on the mother's homestead until 1883, when they built "the first decent frame house in the settlement." The neighbors wondered why Walthers did not buy another quarter section of land instead of building this big house; they could not see why he wanted the latter, living as they generally did in one-room sod houses. The Walthers were hospitable people and the completion of their new home was celebrated by a Fourth of July festival the like of which had never been seen in the settlement. It was attended by about three hundred people from Sundown, Golden Gate, and Sleepy Eye.

The settlement spread into Redwood County and near the close of the century was the third largest Danish settlement in the state. Adventists, Baptists, and Lutherans (Inner Mission People) organized congregations and built churches. Such results were not accomplished without the usual contentions, but these were perhaps less bitter here than elsewhere among the Danes. The Baptists and Lutherans even built union churches, something very unusual in Danish-American history.¹⁸

Other Wisconsin Danes located at Elm Dale, Morrison County, in 1867. The year before, Jens Hansen, formerly a tailor in Copenhagen, had gone there to observe the lay of the land. The immigrants who left Waupaca, Wisconsin, early in the summer of 1867 made up a caravan of six ox carts, which passed through St. Paul on the Fourth of July. The inhabitants of that city were celebrating and the sight of the rustic ox teams tempted some of the yelling merrymakers to shoot over the heads of the frightened home-seekers, who

¹⁸ M. Sorensen, "Sleepy Eye. Et stykke af prærien's saga," in *Julegraven*, 1913. This is a Danish Christmas magazine which has been published annually at Cedar Falls, Iowa, since 1898. See also *Danske i Amerika*, 2: 293-303.

began to wonder whether the city named for the great apostle was inhabited by madmen. At Elm Dale the pioneers built log cabins, more substantial than sod houses; but pioneering was as trying there as elsewhere. It was alleviated somewhat because some of the immigrants were mechanics and could ply their trades at better wages than common laborers could command.

The settlement was not without religious contentions, frequently caused by the activities of lay preachers; but it is interesting to note that there was considerable inter-racial coöperation. The Lutherans, who predominated among the settlers, soon built a log church and organized a congregation that was long served by Norwegian Lutheran pastors. Such religious coöperation was frequently to be observed among the Danish immigrants of central Minnesota living scattered among Norwegians, especially if they had not become identified with either the Grundtvigians or the Inner Mission People before settling in Minnesota. Other groups of Danes who coöperated in church matters with the Norwegian Lutherans located in the sixties near Nelson, Douglas County; and near Arndahl, Meeker County.¹⁹

A compact group of Danish pioneers began to locate near Hutchinson, McLeod County, in the late sixties. A number of families arrived there direct from Denmark in 1868 under the leadership of M. C. Pedersen, who founded the West Denmark settlement in Wisconsin the following year. Religiously, the people in this settlement as usual were divided. Methodists, Baptists, Inner Mission People, and Grundtvigians each organized a congregation and built a church in or near Hutchinson.²⁰ As in so many other settlements the Danish farmers in the Hutchinson settlement were excellent dairymen. In 1901 they helped to build a creamery that was pronounced in every respect a model; and its butter-maker, Mads Sønder-

¹⁹ *Danske i Amerika*, 2: 386, 391-395, 535.

²⁰ *Dannevirke*, March 10, 1909.

gaard, was declared to be the champion butter-maker of America. He was born in North Slesvig, now once more a part of Denmark.²¹

Probably the first Danish name to be put on the map of Minnesota was Danewood, Chisago County, where Ferdinand Sneedorff Christensen attempted without much success to build up a Danish community. He was born in Denmark, was well educated, and emigrated to the United States in 1866. In Minnesota he began in 1868 the publication of *Nordisk Folkeblad*, the first Dano-Norwegian paper in the state. In 1870 he established himself in Rush City as a land agent and two years later he opened a bank in that city. He collected paintings and historical objects, which he kept in "Willow Wild," as he called the handsome home he had built for himself. The destruction of this house by fire is said to have caused him to take his own life. A small chapel built in his memory by his wife, whose maiden name was Selma A. Willard, was dedicated in 1897.²²

Associated with Christensen in the publication of *Nordisk Folkeblad* was the Danish journalist, Søren Listoe, who was born in Copenhagen. Listoe became a member of the Minnesota legislature in 1874, the first Dane to hold this office. Christensen was a member himself in 1878, and he was assistant secretary of state from 1880 to 1882.²³

²¹ *Dagen*, 4: 124 (January 1, 1904). Volumes 3 and 4 of this bimonthly publication are in the author's library.

²² Olof N. Nelson, *History of the Scandinavians and Successful Scandinavians in the United States*, 1: 386 (Minneapolis, 1893-97); *Dannevirke*, October 9, 1895; *Dansk Lutherisk Kirkeblad*, February 10, 1897. Some of the files of the latter paper, the official organ of the United church (Inner Mission People), published at Blair, Nebraska, are in the library of Augustana College at Rock Island, Illinois. The first Swedish settlement in Minnesota was founded near Danewood in 1851. The history of the Swedish settlements in the state is told in Erik Norelius, *De svenska luterske församlingarnas och svenskarnes historia i Amerika*, 1: 534-763 (Rock Island, Illinois, 1890).

²³ Nelson, *Scandinavians in the United States*, 1: 435.

In the late sixties other small groups of Danish pioneer farmers settled near Kasson, Dodge County, and in the vicinity of Storden and Westbrook, Cottonwood County. The settlers at the latter places were to a large extent emigrants from the Baptist groups in Freeborn and Brown counties.²⁴ Other southwestern counties also received Danish settlers at this time, some of whom in a few years helped to swell the current of pioneers to Lincoln County, where the second largest settlement of Danes in the state was established.

The Lincoln County pioneers were Grundtvigians, Danish Lutherans who had organized a church association or synod under the name of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran church in America, briefly called the Danish church.²⁵ The Grundtvigians owe their origin to Bishop N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783-1872), poet, preacher, and patriot, and without doubt the most prominent Dane of his time. He drew much of his inspiration from romanticism, the German philosophers, and contemporary political conditions in Europe, especially England. Economically, he hoped to see a better Denmark where "few had too little and fewer too much." Nationally, he strongly encouraged the development of Danish literature and institutions; and under the spell of his voice and pen the heroes of Danish history lived again in the minds of Danes. Taking his cue from the German philosopher, Fichte, he advocated the establishment of folk high schools, a kind of secondary school for adults, where inspiring lectures were to replace largely dry textbooks, for Grundtvig asserted that the spoken word is living and the written dead.²⁶

²⁴ Lawdahl, *Danske baptister*, 175-186, 208-211.

²⁵ Originally there were also Inner Mission People in the Danish church, but they withdrew in 1894 and, with other Danish Lutherans who had formerly belonged to the Norwegian-Danish Conference, formed the United church.

²⁶ Bishop Grundtvig is very little known among English-speaking people. Though he visited England several times and busied himself with some English literary subjects, the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 12:640 (eleventh edition), makes the following comment on his works and

To Grundtvig, nationalism and religion were closely associated. In his youth he once said that the strife between the strong Thor and the white Christ was blotted out. Later in life he suggested that the apostolic creed rather than the Bible was the source and fount of Christian life.²⁷ This suggestion caused a bitter controversy between Grundtvig's followers and the Inner Mission People, who believed in the verbal inspiration of the Bible — a controversy that was continued by the Danish Lutherans in the United States, where Bishop Grundtvig's youngest son, the Reverend F. L. Grundtvig, became the standard-bearer of Grundtvigianism in 1883 and remained so until his removal to Denmark in 1900. During these years he was pastor of a Lutheran congregation at Clinton, Iowa. Besides preaching, he was engaged also in lecturing and writing for the promotion of Danish-American ideals. He died in 1903.²⁸

Under the inspiration of the younger Grundtvig, the Danish church in 1884 secured an option on thirty-five thousand acres of land in Lincoln County from the Winona and St. Peter Railroad Company through the company's agent, Adolph Boysen. For a period of three years the land was to be open to purchase by Danes only. The price for the first year was to be seven dollars an acre, and there was to be an advance of fifty cents in the price each succeeding year. The railroad company donated a tract of 240 acres for a church and a folk high school, and the church agreed to secure at least one hundred settlers the first year.

influence: "He was above all things a man of action, not an artist; and the formless vehemence of his writings, which have had a great influence over his own countrymen, is hardly agreeable or intelligible to a foreigner." Much, however, has been written about Grundtvig in German. Winkel Horn, *Grundtvigs liv og gjerning* (Copenhagen, 1883) is one of the best earlier lives of Grundtvig in Danish. See also P. Hansen, *Illustreret dansk litteraturhistorie*, 2: 629 (Copenhagen, 1886).

²⁷ N. F. S. Grundtvig, *Den kristelige børnelærdom*, 282-286 (Copenhagen, 1883).

²⁸ See the chapter on the "Reverend Frederik Lange Grundtvig," in Christensen, "History of the Danes in Iowa."

The church was able to meet this requirement within the time specified. It was then decided to celebrate the founding of the settlement in an appropriate manner. The occasion and the manner of this celebration, which occurred on June 28, 1885, make it one of the most interesting events in Danish-American history. It was held on an island in Lake Benton, on the shores of which nestled the little town of that name.²⁹ About fifty persons, including the settlers and a number of ministers of the Danish church, were in attendance. Grundtvig spoke on the value of the social heritage of the Danish-Americans and made a touching appeal for its preservation in harmony with Grundtvigian ideals. The same thoughts had been embodied by him in a song that was sung here for the first time and may still be heard at social gatherings of Danish-Americans throughout the United States.

Settlers arrived during the following years from other parts of Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Illinois, though only a small number came direct from Denmark. A large contingent arrived from Clinton, where they had been members of Grundtvig's congregation. They filled up several townships and spread into the adjoining counties of Lyon and Pipestone. Immigration continued during the nineties, but since the beginning of the present century the situation has been changed and some emigration has occurred, especially of young people, to other Danish settlements.

Lincoln County had been settled before the coming of the Grundtvigians, but pioneering had been so difficult that many early settlers had left in despair. The Grundtvigian pioneers endured the hardships of pioneering — hailstorms, drouths, and the resulting crop failures, poverty, and high rates of

²⁹ The lake and the town were named for Thomas Hart Benton, United States senator from Missouri from 1821 to 1851. Joseph N. Nicollet and John C. Fremont, who explored this region in 1838, named the lake. Fremont was married to Benton's daughter Jessie in 1841. Warren Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names; Their Origin and Historic Significance*, 308 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 17).

interest — better than their predecessors because of their capacity for hard work and their social solidarity. As early as 1894 "a giant stride of progress" was made with the building of a coöperative creamery that gave the farmers a regular income and contributed to their prosperity. Creameries were also built in the following years in Ruthton and Lake Benton, two towns on the outskirts of the settlement. Other coöperative enterprises promoted economic progress, but the chief factor in the advance of the settlement was intensive diversified farming.

On July 11, 1886, the settlers organized a Danish-Lutheran congregation and the next year they sent "a call" to Grundtvig, who replied that he would accept it only on the condition that no members of secret societies would be allowed to join the church. This condition was aimed at the Danish Brotherhood, a fraternal organization patterned after the American secret societies. As it had several members in the settlement, the church refused to accede to Grundtvig's request; and finally in 1888 it called the Reverend P. H. Pedersen, who had been connected with the folk high school at Ashland, Newaygo County, Michigan.

A letter written by Pedersen to the congregation shows that he was a man of energy and resolution, well-fitted to be one of the honored founders of the settlement. "I am coming without conditions," he wrote. "The salary makes no difference. So do not be concerned about that. I will look out for the salary myself. Besides, we will soon have twice as many members in the church as it now has, for I am the kind of man who enjoys work and will not permit you to fall behind. . . . I am not courting the congregation for pleasure's sake but for the work, for which I do not consider myself unfitted."⁵⁰

He was right. In 1888 a folk high school was built. Some pious people may wonder why the school was built before a

⁵⁰ *Danske i Amerika*, 2: 492.

church, but they should remember that the Grundtvigians "delight in enlightenment," even about "so humble a thing as a sedge," but first and last about life — personal, home, national, and religious life. And such enlightenment this folk high school aimed to give. The next year the Stone Hall was built. The farmers dragged stones from the fields. These rough stones were cut into shapely blocks by two skilled workmen, Niels Pedersen and Kristian Klink. For them this was a labor of love and they worked gratuitously. Klink died shortly after the completion of this building, happy in the thought that he had helped to give the settlement a community center. The Stone Hall served as a church, a gymnasium, — for the Grundtvigians believed a sound mind should be housed in a sound body, — and a general meeting house until a neat, commodious frame church was dedicated in 1895. The educational activities of the Grundtvigians also included a parochial school for which a building was erected in 1892. Its aim was to teach the common branches in English; and religion and Danish history and literature in Danish. It also aimed at a closer coöperation between home and school. Not all the Danish children, however, attended it. All these buildings were located on a slight eminence near a pretty little lake immediately south of the corporate limits of Tyler and the place was named Danebod (pronounced Dän'-ne-boh) in honor of Queen Thyra Danebod, the consort of Gorm the Elder, an early king of Denmark. She is thought to have directed the building of an earth and stone wall across the peninsula of Jutland as a protection against southern foes, and in gratitude the Danes named her Danebod, that is, the comfort of Denmark.

Pedersen was the moving spirit in these enterprises. That he also aided in a material way will surprise the uninitiated, for he received but a small salary. The explanation is that Pedersen, besides being an able preacher and educator, was also a man with superior business ability. In 1903 he and his family removed to Ruthton, where he continued to be active in

church work until his death in 1905. The Reverend Thorvald Knudsen succeeded him at Danebod.

At the turn of the century the settlement was in every way a prosperous and happy community. The anticipations of its founders had been realized. Everywhere in town and country might be seen evidences of Danish thrift, order, industry, and sense of beauty. In the homes Danish was spoken. It might also be heard on the streets, well and proudly spoken. Danebod had become a fountain of comfort and inspiration to the community, drawing visitors from near and far to its larger meetings. In all this there was no extreme and exclusive clannishness. The settlers became Americanized — they learned English, became naturalized, voted, and were active generally in political affairs. Speakers at Danebod would sometimes explain the national affections of the people as analogous to those of the husband who loves his wife, but continues also to love his mother.³¹

Believing that a special society rather than the church should undertake the formation of settlements, Grundtvig and his friends organized the Danish People's Society (*Dansk Folkesamfund*) in 1887, with the general aim of conserving and developing the social heritage of the Danish immigrants. The society's first venture in this respect was Danevang in Wharton County, Texas; and its second, Askov in Pine County, Minnesota.

Through its agents, K. H. Duus and L. C. Pedersen, both of Tyler, the Danish People's Society in 1906 purchased twenty

³¹ J. H. Bille, "A History of the Danes in America," in Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters, *Transactions*, 11: 26 (Madison, 1896-97); *Danske i Amerika*, 2: 473-507; Lawdahl, *Danske baptister*, 201-206; Kristian Ostergaard, "De danske højskoler," in *Kors og stjerne*, November 1, 1903; Kristian Ostergaard, "The Danish Settlement at Tyler, Minnesota," in *Scandinavia*, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 20-24 (April, 1924). *Kors og stjerne* is a periodical published in Denmark in the interest of the Grundtvigians; the article on Tyler is based largely upon *Danske i Amerika*. The church register, number 1, of the Danish Lutheran Church at Tyler, in the possession of the church officers, was also used.

thousand acres of cut-over and burnt-over land in Pine County. These lands were bought at different prices, but sold at a uniform rate to the settlers. Forty-five tracts, many consisting of only forty and eighty acres, were sold the first year and about twenty-five families moved in from southern Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois, and Iowa. Settlers continued to arrive in the following years from these and other states; only a few immigrants came direct from Denmark. Having been in this country for a period of years, most of the pioneers, therefore, knew English and had acquired property. Not a few, indeed, were well-to-do. This made the pioneer period a short one, though it was not without hardships.

One who has seen the cut-over and burnt-over lands of northern Minnesota can scarcely imagine anything more desolate. What a hopeless task, it would seem, to farm such wastes. It seemed the very soil itself had to be created, for the land was full of rocks and of white pine stumps that would not rot in a century. But these thrifty, vigorous Danes set to work with a will and made the wastes blossom like the rose. That it was done during the span of a single decade, at the close of which every visitor expressed his wonder and admiration for what had been accomplished, was due to various factors. Among them were the economic advantages that the settlers had before coming to Pine County, the aid given by the People's Society and its efficient agents, and probably chiefly the strong faith of the people in their ability to achieve success. As in Lincoln County a large number of the settlers were Grundtvigians with a capacity for a varied but healthy sociability and conviviality. None perhaps more than the Grundtvigians have realized so fully that man does not live by bread alone, but by the things that make for a better social life as well.

In 1916, only ten years after the founding of the Askov settlement, it had about a thousand people of Danish descent. Most of them were living in Partridge Township, with Askov,

a little brand-new village inhabited exclusively by Danes, as social center. The name Askov is of ancient origin and seems originally to have meant "ash wood." It was chosen because it was the name of the Askov Folk High School in Denmark, an institution especially dear to Grundtvigian hearts. Besides stores and shops, in 1916 the little village also boasted a large public school, two halls for social gatherings, a fine Danish Lutheran church, a bank, and a weekly newspaper, the *Askov American*. There were no saloons. In the *Askov American* a visitor to the town in that year might have read in the bank's advertisement this philosophical observation: "Character is the basis of credit, the dollar absolutely secondary." If he had questioned the villagers, they would have told him that they had a public school offering twelve grades of work, that Danish was taught an hour each day, and that the local church supported a Danish religious school for children and a continuation school in winter with courses for adults in both Danish and English. The inquirer might also have learned that Askov had a ladies' aid society, a young people's society, a lodge of the Danish Brotherhood, a band, and a local chapter of the Danish People's Society, not to speak of the farmers' club and other organizations of an economic character. None of these organizations were without educational aims, and the stranger in Askov would have believed readily that one of the mottoes of the Grundtvigians was "Enlightenment must be our delight."

Such a social life was supported by an intensive cultivation of the red soil of the former pineries, with dairying and truck-farming as the chief branches of agriculture. A coöperative creamery was built in 1910.³² Many other Danish settlers have

³² Hugh J. Hughes, "Now up at Askov," in *The Farmer's Wife*, 22: 67, 86 (August, 1920); "One Way of Handling the Settlement Problem," in *The Farmer*, 30: 1031 (August 31, 1912); L. C. Pedersen, "Partridge, Minnesota," in *Julegranen*, 1908; "Story of a Growing Town," in *Partridge Wing* (Askov), August 4, 1911; L. Mosbaek, "Askov, Minn., 1915," in *Solomons Almanak* (Seattle, Washington, 1916). This *Almanak*, which

located on the prairies and in the woods of northern Minnesota during the present century, but none have formed larger settlements with a distinct Danish community life. Askov in that respect is therefore an exception.

A sketch of the founding of Danish settlements in Minnesota would be incomplete without mention of the Icelandic settlements in Lyon and Lincoln counties. At the time of their establishment the Icelanders were Danish citizens and they are listed as such in the United States census reports.³³ Though Danes and Icelanders are too far apart linguistically and nationally to have a common community life, they cherish their racial and cultural kinship.

Most of the Icelanders in North America live in Canada. In the United States there are large settlements in North Dakota and Minnesota, and smaller groups in Wisconsin, Utah, Idaho, and Washington. The settlements in Minnesota are in the vicinity of Marshall and Minneota in Lyon County and of Ivanhoe in Lincoln County. They date from the later seventies, the first Icelandic settler in Lyon County having arrived in 1875 and the first in Lincoln County in 1878. Enough additional settlers came during the following years so that three Lutheran congregations, now having a total membership of over five hundred, were formed. The Icelandic pioneers took homesteads or bought the farms of other settlers who had already located on the public lands. For a few years they lived in sod houses and drove oxen. But by 1885 horses were commonly used, an evidence of the rapid progress that the early settlers had made.

In these settlements, as indeed elsewhere, the Icelanders have cherished tenderly their home traditions. The pioneers taught was published from 1914 to 1918, contains a good deal of historical material and especially a wealth of biographical data on Danish-Americans. Since 1906 numerous articles on the Askov settlement have appeared in *Dannevirke*, *Ugebladet* (Minneapolis), and *Den danske pioneer* (Omaha, Nebraska).

³³ Since 1918 Iceland has been an independent country, united with Denmark only in the person of a common king.

their children Icelandic and read periodicals from the mother country as well as Icelandic-American publications. Americanization, however, rapidly added to the interests of the people. The children eagerly learned English and both young and old busied themselves with questions of public interest. The result has been that an unusually large number of these northern people have become politicians both of local and state fame. Since 1913 three men from these settlements have been members of the Minnesota legislature — Gunnar B. Björnson, C. M. Gislason, and J. B. Gislason.³⁴

THOMAS P. CHRISTENSEN

IOWA CITY, IOWA

³⁴ Data obtained from the Honorable J. B. Gislason.

MINNESOTA AS SEEN BY TRAVELERS

A SWEDISH VISITOR OF THE EARLY SEVENTIES

In 1874 there was published in Stockholm, Sweden, a travel book by Hugo Nisbeth bearing the title *Två År i Amerika, (1872–1874); Reseskildringar*, or, in translation, *Two Years in America (1872–1874); Accounts of Travel*. The various Swedish biographical aids do not mention this traveler, but from his own book we learn that he was a well-educated man whose home was in the Swedish capital and that he was on intimate terms with members of the official class in his native country. To facilitate his American journey he carried with him letters from Swedish officials to all the Scandinavian consuls in the United States and to many prominent Americans.

Often the purposes motivating a traveler's journey are more important for the student of history than the facts of his life, and on this point Nisbeth is explicit in his foreword. "In this journey," he writes, "I intended principally to visit those parts of the country about which Swedish readers know little or nothing. I have therefore made my observations in the wilderness of the 'West,' on the fringes of civilization, on the Pacific coast and in the sagaland of California." To Nisbeth, Minnesota was a part of the wilderness of the West, and to his experiences and observations in this state he devotes five chapters. In fact, after his arrival at Quebec he went directly to Minnesota, where he looked forward to the speedy fulfillment of yet another purpose—that of meeting as many Swedes in America as possible. His quest for his countrymen in Minnesota was not a fruitless one, as he soon discovered. The census figures for 1870 would have afforded him ample assurance on this point, for of the 160,697 foreign-born in Minnesota in that year, 59,390 were Scandinavians.

Nisbeth's travels took him not only to the older Swedish settlements of the state, but also to remoter regions that had

recently been penetrated by the railroad. When this traveler had taken the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, now the Great Northern, to Breckenridge, then the Northern Pacific from Moorhead to Duluth, and finally the Lake Superior and Mississippi back again to St. Paul he had made a complete circuit of frontier Minnesota. Such was the "grand tour" that the young state was able to offer in 1872.

In the following pages an English translation is presented of Nisbeth's narrative of his travels in Minnesota, drawn from scattered chapters in his book.

ROY W. SWANSON

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ST. PAUL

[Hugo Nisbeth, *Två Ar i Amerika*, (1872-1874); *Reseskildringar*, 33-70, 145-158 (Stockholm, 1874)]

CHAPTER 4

[This chapter opens, appropriately enough, with the famous advice attributed to Horace Greeley, though the Swedish traveler, essaying to quote the exact English words, produces an amazing version: "Go to the West, get your a farm and grew up with the country." After a few general comments on Greeley, the author takes up his own story.]

A visit of about two months in the northwest of the cultivated area of North America, or the state of Minnesota, has convinced me that Horace Greeley was a very good adviser, for during this period—in which I traversed the above-named state in every direction and used every conceivable form of transportation, the famous "prairie schooner" not excepted—I found the following conditions: In the eastern part of the state there is general prosperity, and in the central part a tolerably assured livelihood; and farther west, or where the settlers now live in primitive fashion, there is a new life of denial and hard work, lightened and made bearable by the thought that one does not toil in vain—the powerful factor that inspires everything in America. And if Horace Greeley had been permitted to live two or three generations more he could still afford to "go to the West," for the West does not

cease with Minnesota or Iowa or Nebraska or Missouri and Arkansas. West of these states again, where room and abundant food for millions of industrious people yet remain, lies a rich and mighty land comprising the states and territories of Dakota, Montana, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California, Arizona, and others. These regions, with fertile soil and almost inexhaustible mineral riches of every kind, including enormous coal fields, still for the most part lie open to enterprise. North America's East has already extended a great railroad across this enormous country, and two other roads have been begun, the "Northern Pacific" and the "Atlantic Pacific," not to mention other proposed lines. The former goes out from Duluth on Lake Superior and the latter from St. Louis, the principal city of the state of Missouri. Once thus traversed by roads, these lands will be won to the civilization of the East, just as the East had been won in the past, and will share its wealth with the whole world, for the railroads will bring with them industrious and intelligent people who will spread over this vast area and there establish, within a century, ever more complex ways of living. For the man inured to hardships, who can and will deny himself the comforts of life and who brings with him only a pair of strong arms, a sound mind, and irrepressible energy, the West is the place. There he will never feel want, for his resources will be ample. For those immigrants, on the other hand, who believe that roast sparrows will fly into their mouths as soon as they set foot on American soil, who go about the big cities with their hands in their pockets and instead of working starve or become a burden to their countrymen, and who later fill the columns of the Swedish newspapers with their jeremiads against America and the treatment they received there, the West is no better than the East. Such people do better in every respect by remaining at home. This great though young country, undergoing a development which is amazing to a European who is accustomed to slow progress at best, requires work of every one of its inhabitants. Here one must keep up or be left behind. To keep up is equivalent to progress, to be left behind as a result of failing strength or determination is equivalent to poverty and ruin.

* * * * *

I arrived in St. Paul by the Chicago and Milwaukee some days before Midsummer Day.¹ St. Paul, lying on the right bank of the Mississippi, is a neat, well-built city, although evidently still in its youth, with a population of about thirty thousand — one thousand in 1852 and twelve hundred in 1856 — of whom six to seven hundred are Swedes. The city has tolerably clean streets, which are not exactly commonplace in America, and it even has street cars, although the streets incline somewhat steeply toward the river. It has elegant and well-furnished stores which compare favorably with those of Europe's larger cities. With a few exceptions there is, in general, nothing to suggest that one is in the westernmost part of the cultivated area of America. The center of the city is made up entirely of business houses, many of which occupy palatial buildings; and the dwellings, each one in the midst of its little garden, surround the city on three sides. These dwellings are all pretty, often actually dignified, and possess that homelike air which their exteriors indicate and their interiors do not contradict. This no doubt is due chiefly to the fact that the American, who always is the sole occupant of his house, devotes every possible care to this, his refuge from the madding business world.

It was, as I mentioned above, a few days before Midsummer Day when I arrived in this city at six o'clock in the morning. I had scarcely got my things up to one of the many and elegant hotels which are found there and placed myself at the breakfast table (in parenthesis I wish to state here that in America, particularly in the West, one starts to eat breakfast at six o'clock in the morning) when I had the good fortune to meet a Stockholmer, Mr. V. B. He had sojourned in Minnesota for three or four years and had had many hardships to contend with before he at last had the good luck to secure a paying position. He was the first Stockholmer I had met since I left Sweden, and since he was, to boot, an old acquaintance, the meeting was the more pleasant. After I presented my letter of introduction to the governor of the state, Mr. Austin, by whom I was welcomed in

¹ *Midsommardagen* or St. John's Day, June 24, is observed by the Swedes in church services and festivals. See *post*, p. 390.

a most friendly manner and who introduced me to the secretary of state, General Hansen [*Colonel Hans Mattson*], and his assistant, *docent* Sohlberg from Norway, I looked up the representative of the united kingdoms [*Norway and Sweden*] in St. Paul, Consul Sahlgaard, a young Norwegian who has sought with zeal and earnestness to fill the responsibilities one can reasonably impose on a consul in such a distant place as Minnesota. In his company I visited the public schools and the Capitol, the latter the meeting place for the state legislature, distinguished chiefly for the great number of spittoons set everywhere for the convenience of the representatives. In his company I also took a pleasant trip by wagon to the pretty waterfall of Minnehaha, or laughing waters, situated eleven English miles away.² Later I accepted an invitation to spend the midsummer holidays at Mr. A. Lindholm's farm, situated fifty English miles from St. Paul, right in the heart of the largest Swedish settlement in Minnesota. This settlement is called Vasa and was founded in 1853. It boasts about fifteen hundred Swedes, of whom about one thousand belong to the Lutheran church that stands on the top of a lovely hill. This church of about six hundred communicants was built by voluntary contributions from the congregation. It was completed a year ago and, so far as size and elegance are concerned, it compares favorably with the best rural churches in Sweden. It is one hundred feet long by sixty feet wide and cost \$25,000. I attended the services there on Midsummer Day and made the acquaintance of several of the Swedish farmers who were present. In vain I waited to see some of the Swedish peasant costumes, but not a trace of them was to be seen. The men were dressed in neat, light-weight American suits, and to judge by the women's dress one could as easily believe that he was present at a play in Stockholm, as in a Swedish peasant church on the western frontier of America. Of homespun kirtles, modest silk kerchiefs, and headcloths, not a single example was seen; but, on the other hand, one saw everywhere fine, light tulle dresses, nor were even silk dresses missing. There were lace

²There are six and six-tenths English miles to one Swedish mile. Today, however, Sweden uses the metric system, which was adopted in 1878.

shawls, light straw hats, profusely and often tastefully decorated with flowers and ribbons, and *chignons* fully as handsome as they are in Stockholm. Not only here, but in every other place that I have visited in America, I have found that no group more quickly and readily falls in with the American weakness for bedecking their women than do the Swedes. The Americans will sacrifice their all for their women, and it is not an uncommon sight to see a rather shabbily clad husband walking beside his wife who is dressed most elegantly and often very tastefully. Here such things do not arouse scandal; they are regarded as the most natural thing in the world; and the young lady herself seems not in the least embarrassed by her husband's threadbare and often slovenly appearance. This weakness for dress has invaded all classes, and one must be a keen and experienced observer out here in the West to be able to tell the hired girl from the mistress. On the other hand, it is extremely laughable to see the newly arrived Swedish peasant girls. Decked out in white, with jewels and other ornaments, parasols, and straw hats with flowing ribbons and other finery, they look unusually comical in their attempt to imitate the dignified and untroubled bearing which is so characteristic of the American women.

After the services I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the congregation's pastor, Mr. Norelius. I found him a liberal clergyman free from prejudices. For instance, when I asked him what he thought of the religious freedom that existed in America and especially of the fact that a large number of the Vasa settlers had separated from the Lutheran Church and joined other sects, particularly the Methodist and Baptist, he answered, unexpectedly enough, that he regarded religious freedom to be perfectly right and legitimate, and he added that neither from his nor the congregation's side had any ill feeling been shown against those who belonged to other sects or who never visited a church. "It is fitting," he added, "that there should be religious freedom in a country with such free institutions as the United States."

The Swedish farmers in this part of Minnesota are, in general, well-to-do. Their land is regarded by Americans as the best tilled and their cattle the finest; and their pretty houses, all painted

white, recall vividly the many lovely summer villas on the Stockholm Archipelago. I visited ten or fifteen farmers in the vicinity of the Vasa church and I found everywhere neatness, cleanliness, and comfort as well as respect for the ancient Swedish hospitality. I was received well and cordially. I was asked constantly about "dear, old Sweden," and everywhere the most unfeigned joy was expressed when I reported that we had had three or four good years in Sweden. "How is the king?" was a standing question, "and the gentle Queen Louisa?" Many of these settlers did not know that she had died, nor, later on, did they know that the king himself had passed away. Accordingly, when I described her last moments, her good works quietly performed, and the king's sorrow and illness, many a heart-felt tear was shed, not less worthy because it was wiped away by a hand hardened with toil.⁸

On the homeward journey from Mr. Lindholm's farm to St. Paul we passed through the little town of Red Wing, about five thousand strong, so called after a famous Indian chief who is said to lie buried in a near-by mound. In this pretty little town on the Mississippi there are about nine hundred Swedes. Here we were invited to take part in a midsummer picnic, which happened to be in progress at a farm owned by a Swede eight or ten English miles from town. Here again I met a large number of Swedes and became fully convinced of the good living conditions which all Swedes residing in this part of Minnesota enjoy. True enough, it had taken them eight, ten, and twelve years of toil and privation to attain this prosperity, but the majority of them are still in their best years and can, therefore, still enjoy the fruits of their labor and can go on with the assurance that they have created a position of independence for their children. Here, too, are sung the songs of the old country, truly not always by "selected voices," but nevertheless strongly and heartily for the fatherland. There arose a nine-fold ringing huzza to the honor of the Swedish woman — the mother, wife, sweetheart, and sister. It was not difficult even here to see how deeply and affectionately the emi-

⁸ Charles XV and Queen Louisa are referred to here. The king died on September 18, 1872. The queen, the "gentle Louisa," as she was called, had died the year before.

grating Swede is attached to his old fatherland. All the hardships and privations he suffered at home are forgotten. In the midst of his abundance here he recalls the frugal Swedish home, and few of the many Swedes I met did not wish longingly for the day when they could at least "look in on those at home." Our host, a man of sixty years, and a fine figure of a Swedish yeoman, came up to me after I had proposed a toast to Sweden and said with tear-filled eyes, "I have been out here for fifteen years. It has gone well with me, praise God, and my children, too, are well provided for and happily married here, but I can never reconcile myself to the thought that my old bones will never rest in Swedish soil!" In the sod house on the prairies, in the log cabin, in the forest, in the prosperous farmhouse on the fertile plains, and even among those living in the cities, everywhere there is the same feeling for the fatherland. When I expressed my surprise and wonder at such a state of affairs to an old Småland *bonde*,⁴ he answered me warmly, "Aye, God knows, 'tis not the fault of Sweden that she could not provide thus abundantly for us all."

In Red Wing there is a large wagon and iron safe factory which is owned by two prominent and very ardent Swedes. Their manufacturing is done on a large scale, and in their handsome stock I saw safes priced at from seven to eight hundred dollars. Entirely without capital when they arrived, they have only enterprise, industry, and perseverance to thank for their success. One of the owners of the largest manufacturing firm in Red Wing, which does an annual business of more than half a million rix-dollars,⁵ is a Swede who is greatly respected in the community. Wherever one goes in the little town one meets Swedes, and amiable Swedes at that. There are artists, lawyers, dentists, photographers, restaurant keepers, bookkeepers, artisans, laborers, and others. Their prosperity, of course, is not in excess, but it is tolerably universal, and in addition to a common meeting place, called Svea, which contains a small library, their social life is made agreeable by the many good Swedish women, who do not

⁴ The Swedish *bonde* is a farmer or husbandman.

⁵ The *riksdaler* was at this time the Swedish money unit and was worth about twenty-six and a half cents. The present unit, adopted soon after Nisbeth's visit, is the *krona* or crown, which is worth twenty-seven cents at par value.

hesitate to share with their menfolk the troubles and sacrifices that are ever inseparable from a new life in a new land.

Since this first visit I have been in Red Wing several times and have joined in many excursions from that place, and I shall always preserve in grateful memory the heartfelt friendliness and hospitality which always was my lot there.

CHAPTER 5

[*This chapter opens with a discussion of the American press, after which the Minnesota narrative is resumed.*]

In the company of Consul Sahlgaard I made some shorter excursions by wagon in the neighborhood of St. Paul. We visited Fort Snelling, earlier used as a defence against the Indians, but now used as a penal institution; and the pretty little waterfall of Minnehaha, which has an Indian name meaning "laughing water." Here I made the acquaintance of a *New York Tribune* correspondent, who was faring about on Minnesota's many lakes and waters in a small portable canoe called the "Dolly Varden."⁶ I made arrangements to press deeper into the country, especially into those regions where Swedes had settled. For this purpose I could use two railroad lines along which most of the Swedish settlements were grouped — namely, the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad between St. Paul and Duluth, a small town that has sprung up rapidly on the southwestern shore of Lake Superior; and the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, going from St. Paul in a northwesterly direction and at present completed to Breckenridge, an American town consisting of ten or twelve houses set in the midst of the wilderness on the border of Dakota Territory. I decided to follow the Lake Superior and Mississippi first, as it was the shortest road; and as I had a letter of introduction to its president, Mr. Frank H. Clark, I presented it and sought at the same time such information as would secure me the best possible

⁶ The correspondent was Julius Chambers, whose account of a trip to Elk Lake, Minnesota, appeared in the *New York Herald* for July 6, 1872. He was correspondent for the *Herald*, and not the *Tribune*. Chambers, in his *News Hunting on Three Continents* (New York, 1921), has a chapter entitled "I Seek and Find the Mississippi's Real Source" in which he tells of his Minnesota adventures. See *ante*, 4: 290.

facilities for studying pioneer life in general and Swedish pioneer life in particular. I received from Mr. Clark all the references that would be of use to me, and he even carried his considerateness so far as to give me a traveling companion, Mr. J., a Swede in the company's employ and a person conversant with the conditions along the line. Mr. J. had studied at Upsala for a while and then given up a course at Carlberg in order to join an expedition from Sweden that had promised great profits to its members. He suffered many curious experiences in America before he had the good fortune to secure the position he now holds. Among other things, he was at one time reduced to the necessity of becoming a railroad laborer. It soon became clear that a stout will is not to be subjugated by brawn and mere habit, and accordingly, after he had straightened spikes at \$1.25 a day, he had the good fortune to secure lighter and more congenial work.

We left St. Paul in the afternoon and, after passing through an improved and smiling countryside, beautified by many lake and water scenes, we arrived at the little town of Rush City, situated fifty-five miles directly north of St. Paul. As there were many Swedes here, we planned to remain two days. We took advantage of the hospitality which the justice of the peace, Mr. Christensen, and his charming wife, a young Swedish woman whose maiden name was Willard, were kind enough to extend to us.⁷ Rush City is a town of the kind that seems to have sprung out of the ground. True enough, the streets were laid out. That is to say, the direction and the width were planned, but one could not detect any trace of street construction work. Here one slipped down to the knee in a water hole, there one got stuck in the mire, and here again one had to defend oneself against an angry sow that had appropriated the usable part of the street for herself and her family; not to mention the fact that there were tree stumps two to two and a half feet high in every one of the streets. On the "Swedish street," which was about one hundred feet long and boasted ten houses, the stumps were especially plentiful, and I soon made the discovery that the simplest, quickest, and cleanest way to travel

⁷ See *ante*, p. 375.

this street was to jump leap frog over the stumps.* Of the three hundred inhabitants of the town, from seventy-five to a hundred were Swedes. Some of these were laborers, that is, they worked for a day's wage varying from \$1.75 to \$2.50 a day. Some of these laborers were also farmers who, by outside work, procured means to farm their own land, which was usually in the immediate neighborhood. They were all in relatively good circumstances. Here I met a family I had known in Stockholm. They had just arrived and were in the course of building a house. On the afternoon of the second day we went on a picnic excursion—if it could be called a “picnic” to travel over a road where the mire rose to the bellies of the horses and huge branches at times came near sweeping us off the wagon—to beautiful Rush Lake, whose shores were decorated with pretty little pioneer homes. We deposited here two persons who had come with us in the wagon. They were dressed more like Indians than civilized people, having large mosquito nets on their heads and carrying instruments and tents.

“What sort of people are they?” I asked my host after they had put their packs on their backs and had disappeared in the thickest woods.

“They are two engineers.”

“And where are they going now?”

“They are going twelve miles into the woods to lay out another city! This is done very easily here,” he added, “and calls for no special formalities. By the way,” continued my host, “I don't know yet what I shall name it.”

“Oh, that matter is soon settled! What is the name of Mr. Christensen's wife?” I asked.

“Selma Willard.”

“All right, then call it Selmatown!”

And thus it was named, and if I should go back there in five or six years, Mr. Christensen assured me, I would find that Selmatown was a not inconsiderable place.^b

* To leap from stump to stump would no doubt seem the logical thing to do in such a place, but the expression used in the original, *hoppa bock*, means “leap frog.”

^b There is no other evidence to show that the writer's suggestion ever was adopted.

Thus are cities made in America!

In Rush City, as well as along the entire railroad to Duluth, there are many sawmills, and enormous quantities of finely sawed lumber are shipped from this region for the most part to the prairies, where it is used for building purposes. These sawmills and the large lumbering interests connected with them are a good source of income to the farmers, many of whom have but little equipment and need money to improve their land and make it profitable. One enterprising Swedish *bonde* in Rush City began an industry which if rightly managed will probably grow to huge proportions. He manufactures birch-bark snuffboxes and other articles of the same material. He has been fortunate in getting his wares advertised and winning sales, and he has my host to thank for his success, for the latter supplied him with capital and secured customers for him. The *bonde*, by the way, insists upon making the snuffboxes the same shape as those used in Småland and upon always putting the royal Swedish coat of arms on the cover. A brick kiln was in the process of construction in the little town when I was there.

Duluth is a town that has sprung up rapidly on the southwest shore of Lake Superior, and has already more than five thousand inhabitants, although it is only three or four years old. The people there predict that Duluth will be the Chicago of the new West. This depends eventually on the development of the northwestern railway system. With Jay Cook's failure, the completion of the Northern Pacific has been postponed for an indefinite period and as a result the development of the young city is essentially, not to say definitely, checked. The town has several factories and sawmills, and railroad tracks run in every direction to facilitate the transportation of freight. Of the five thousand inhabitants, nine hundred are Swedes. The majority of them are day laborers, receiving from \$2.00 to \$2.50 a day for their work. Board and room cost \$4.00 a week for a laborer. Everything has two sides in this world, however, for at the Clark House, the hotel where I stayed, the price was \$4.00 per day!

There are two Swedish churches here, one of which is a Methodist church. These two churches have a very unusual origin. Among the Swedes who first came to Duluth was a Småland

bonde by the name of H. He was a Methodist and he met seven other Methodists among the Swedes there. H., who "dabbled in religion," appointed himself pastor of the little Methodist congregation, and as such soon launched the notion that a church was necessary. No sooner said than done! H. had learned that Americans are very generous, especially when it comes to building churches, and he took advantage of this knowledge in a rather too ingenious fashion. He procured a list and began to go around to the most prominent and the richest Americans with requests for aid for the building of a church. It went like a dance! The first one gave a large piece of ground as a building site; the second, third, fourth, etc. gave money, from ten even up to a hundred dollars. In a week H. had his plot of ground and a subscribed sum of nearly eight thousand dollars. He hastened to turn this into cash and the work of building began. The other Swedes in the town — that is, the non-Methodists — opened their eyes in amazement when they saw the eight Methodists begin on their magnificent church edifice and they quickly got together a committee to seek voluntary gifts toward an Evangelical Lutheran church. The members of the committee immediately drew up a list and began going around the town. Like the Methodists they turned to the well-to-do among the town's inhabitants. How great was their anger and surprise when the answer they received everywhere was a cold *no!*

"And what is your objection?" finally asked the stunned Swedish committee members.

"Simply this, that we have donated to a Swedish church before."

"Yes, we know that. But that congregation consists of only eight members while we are about eight hundred."

"We know nothing about that. The person who received our contributions solicited them for a *Swedish* church. We did not know that this church was divided into two congregations but thought it was for every Swede's common welfare that our help was intended. By the by, it was 'smart' work," continued the American, laughing and snapping his fingers, "very smart, indeed!"

After they had laughed for a while over H.'s adroitness, which was very much to their taste, and had informed the sobered

Swedish committee members that the first requirement for getting ahead in America was to be alert and attentive to the main chance, they took the list and gave such generous contributions that within a few days more than five thousand dollars was subscribed and the other church edifice could be started. Both are now finished and make a good appearance, but when one compares them one can very readily see that the Methodists had a couple of thousand dollars more to spend on theirs.

The majority of the Swedes in Duluth were, as I have said before, laborers and artisans. All those to whom I talked were content and confident that they could "pile up money." One Swede, Mr. Hegardt from Stockholm, ran a large grocery store.

One day in Duluth as I wandered around the places most frequented by laborers in the hope of meeting as many Swedes as possible, I met in a beer hall three men who looked like newly arrived countrymen of mine. I opened a conversation with them and finally asked if they would drink a glass of beer. Yes, they had no objection to that. When the beer was served I took my glass, touched it against theirs, and said, "Skoal, my countrymen!" This, however, did not turn out so well.

"No," said their leader setting down his glass, "you may not say 'countrymen.'"

"And why not?" I asked, astonished.

"No, you see we are Norwegians."

"Yes, but we are at least Scandinavians then," I remonstrated.

"No, no!" cried the Norwegian and thumped his glass with force several times on the table, "we are only Norwegian—nothing else."

This was not the first time that I was in a position to see that the Norwegians out here are not particularly friendly toward the Swedes. It is a fact, as I myself have had the opportunity to note on several occasions and which is verified by persons who are better acquainted with conditions than I am, that the relations between the Danes and the Swedes in general are much more intimate and cordial than those between the Norwegians and the Swedes.

A genial, well-educated man from Copenhagen whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Duluth and who introduced me to several

Americans,—among others to the editor of the *Duluth Daily Herald*, Dr. Dintler,—always began his introductions in the following manner, "Allow me to present to you a countryman of mine, etc." adding, with a friendly smile, that I actually was a Swede but that we considered one another countrymen.

In Duluth, as in Rush City, an immigrant home, where immigrants may live without charge while they are seeking land, has been established by the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad Company. These homes are roomy and comfortable, furnished with private sleeping rooms, bathroom, large kitchen, wash room, etc. The one in Duluth resembled a first-class hotel in one of Sweden's larger towns more than an immigrant home.

After I had made a few trips by wagon into Duluth's pretty suburbs (very reminiscent of Norway's wooded regions) and rowed seven miles across the bay to Superior City, where several Swedish railroad workers lived in comfortable circumstances, I returned to St. Paul, stopping on the way at the stations from which I could penetrate into the country and meet Swedish farmers. I met many such, and among others, near the railroad between Rush City and North Branch, the members of a small Swedish colony of about eighty persons. These had not come direct from Sweden, but like many other Swedes had first settled in the state of Mississippi. For one reason or another they had not had the success there that they expected. Some died, some moved to other states, and for a time the remainder lived a very miserable life. Colonel H. Mattson was at that time in St. Paul in the employ of the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad Company. These needy Swedes heard of him and wrote to him asking aid to remove to Minnesota. It is as great an honor to his heart as to his head that Colonel Mattson obtained from his company the necessary means for their removal. These Swedes are now settled in good, roomy houses, satisfied with their condition, and show promise of an even better future. The company's expenses for this removal amounted to about eight thousand rix-dollars.

The Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad is about 155 English miles long and, it is predicted, will be an especially profitable line. . . .

* * * * *

CHAPTER 6

After the completion of my trip on the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad I took another trip along the St. Paul and Pacific road to the middle and northwestern parts of Minnesota, which are well populated by Swedes. This time, too, I had a pleasant traveling companion in an elderly Swede, a cultured and well-read man, well-known as the translator into English of Tegnér's *Axel och Maria*. With a few exceptions the two thousand well-bound copies of this work, however, became the prey of the flames in the Chicago fire. One of those saved, bound in velvet with gold lettering, was in the possession of Christina Nilson.

The St. Paul and Pacific road is a large company formed by rich eastern capitalists who plan to lay two railway lines from St. Paul, one cutting the northwestern and the other the central part of northern Minnesota in order to join with the Northern Pacific Railroad now under construction westward from Duluth.

We left St. Paul and after passing through a pretty, variable countryside arrived in the afternoon at the tiny, two-year-old town of Litchfield. This town has an almost exclusively Swedish population, all in good circumstances. We decided to remain there a few days, partly in order to visit the neighboring farmers and partly to be present at the celebration of the Fourth of July, the anniversary of the declaration of independence of the United States.

In a comfortable wagon — American wagons are without exception of first-rate quality — we rode the next day into the neighboring country for distances varying from ten to fifteen miles, and everywhere we met honest and faithful Swedes, owners of neat houses and waving fields of grain, happy in their family life, and holding sacred the ancient Swedish hospitality. It was not a struggle for the barest necessities of life that we met here. No, the first hard times had already passed. The majority, however, had been here five, six, and eight years and even longer before they could enjoy in full that prosperity which in general always rewards the farmer in America who does not fall before the first onslaught of hardships. These hardships, naturally, are even greater if, as often happens, one has nothing to contribute but two

empty hands, and in addition is unacquainted with the English language. Around Litchfield the larders must have been full to judge from the groaning tables and the good condition of the granaries and stables. The billowing grain and the juicy, green grass were reaped, not with scythes, but mostly with ingeniously constructed reaping machines.

After a day pleasantly spent among the Swedish farmers in the neighborhood of Litchfield we returned to the little town. Early the following morning we were awakened by the sounds of hissing rockets, shots, and divers other not especially attractive noise-making devices with which the town's American population hailed its freedom's day. We hurried to get up, and after we had had breakfast in American fashion at half past six in the morning, we went out on the hotel balcony to get a view. What life, what movement! The town's entire male population seemed to be up, singing or rather shouting with joy. Revolvers flashed in most hands, and I must say, they were often used! The upper atmosphere was crisscrossed with hissing rockets and the lower, where we mortals walked, by crackers, rockets, spinning-wheels, and the like. On the whole it was a perfect chaos and not exactly of a harmless kind. I was just on the point of asking my companion if our safety did not depend on a "concentration backwards" which would still leave us in possession of the field, when, through the billowing powder smoke some distance away, my eye suddenly caught sight of a well-known object, everywhere beloved — *the Swedish flag* raised on the top of a high pole at one corner of the large square where the "celebration" took place. It was the first time since leaving Sweden that I had seen our flag and — it may now seem sentimental and unmanly — I felt my heart beat faster and my eyes fill with tears. There was now no longer any question of retreating, cost what it would. Forward we would go to the dear blue and gold colors and press the friendly hands that raised them! We threw ourselves into the mob, almost wading in flame and smoke, and came at last to our goal without any other mishap than getting a bit powder stained and having the brim of my straw hat completely torn off by a descending rocket stick. Although my hat, after this reduction from above, resembled a chaplain's old-fashioned nightcap more than a some-

what respectable head covering designed for a temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, I waved it lustily as we neared the blue-gold banner and tipped it respectfully to the young and noticeably happy pair, both from Stockholm, who in this manner wished to show Americans that there was yet another land, far, far away, which shared in their joy.

How we were received here, I need hardly relate. Did not the Swedish colors wave over the door? Enough! We found a welcome shelter in the pretty home of this couple and it was with sincere regret that we left them after a few delightful hours of their company.

We left the railroad at Litchfield and took a wagon for a three or four-day trip to Minnesota's frontier to visit those Swedish farmers who lived in log cabins and sod houses. The regions we first passed through were pretty and delightful. There was water in great plenty and wood still existed, although it was relatively scarce. For instance, one saw here more and more unclaimed land, and respectable looking dwelling houses became fewer. Soon we left the edge of the wooded area, where still an occasional log cabin was to be seen, and in a short time came out on the endless prairie. Not a tree, not a single shrub met the eye wherever one turned. Everywhere there was emptiness, the silence of death. One felt oppressed by this great, vast emptiness. There was no road, of course, nor was one necessary, for the prairie was nearly as flat as a floor and wherever one went one had but to follow one's map, one's instinct, and the sun. If one adds to all this the fact that the burning sun produces heat that sometimes rises to 110 degrees Fahrenheit and causes unendurable thirst, one can easily imagine that there are pleasanter things in life than making pleasure trips out on the prairie. The prairies of northwestern America are of two kinds: those that are perfectly *flat*, where not a trace of vegetation exists except the grass mentioned above, and where not the slightest mound or rise is visible; and those that appear to have wave formation and are called *rolling prairies* by the Americans. I cannot give a clearer picture of the latter than to compare them to the sea in "L'Africaine" or "The Flying Dutchman," stretching out to infinity, their irregular waves taking on like proportions.

It is on the latter type of prairie that the dwellers in sod houses settled. These prairies are in many cases to be preferred, partly for the ease with which one can get a dwelling (one has but to burrow into a hillock), partly because one has more protection from the wind. Here, too, the vegetation is somewhat richer and the water supply more plentiful. Here farmers can venture a bit farther out than on the flat prairie. After a day's journey over level country we arrived on the rolling prairie and climbed up on one of the highest hillocks to see if we could not discern some sign of humanity. We wandered a long time in vain from hillock to hillock until at last we saw at a considerable distance a bluish smoke rising. Thither we went. Of course at first we were uncertain whether the smoke might not have its source in some prairie fire, since these occur here often enough, but when we came nearer we soon discovered that it rose from a sort of chimney and thus we concluded that we had finally found one of those famous sod houses which I, among many others in Sweden, had heard mentioned with a doubtful smile. We rapidly drew near and were soon so close that we could make out the dwelling's surroundings and its "architecture."

It reminded one of a half sphere about fifteen feet high, one side of which was cut off perpendicularly to the height of eight or ten feet. Into this side one burrowed, beginning with an opening about four feet wide and six to eight feet high, the so-called "door opening"; afterward the interior of the hillock was enlarged as desired and a hole was made in the top. In the door opening posts were set and on these a door was hung. All this I could make out at a distance. We soon drew near and I got out of the wagon and approached. Just in front of the door some potato patches were laid out, and in one of these stood a young woman with an infant on her arm. Three other children sat on the ground sorting potatoes. Was the woman a Swede? I both wished it and did not wish it. I wished it because I had journeyed out here purposely to meet Swedes, but, on the other hand, I did not wish it when I reflected what a life these pioneers of civilization are doomed to live. I approached the young woman. With half open mouth and wide eyes she and the children awaited the visit, certainly an unusual one for them, of persons dressed in European

clothes who came in a handsome carriage. The following conversation ensued. I give it carefully from my notebook as I wrote it down on the spot. Uncertain as to her nationality, I began [*in English*] :

"Do you live here?"

"Yes." (It sounded as little American as possible.)

"You are from Sweden, perhaps?" [*in Swedish*].

"Yes, that I am. Is the gentleman also from there?"

"Yes, I am. I have just come over from Sweden and am at present traveling about in Minnesota."

"Of course, the gentleman is here to seek out land?"

"No, I am not. I have no intention of becoming a farmer in America. I am traveling only in order to meet my countrymen and find out how they live in the New World."

"The gentleman will sail back again to the old country?"

"Yes, that is my intention."

"The gentleman is indeed fortunate!"

"How so? Don't you find yourself contented out here?"

"Oh, yes, that's understood. We cannot complain. But however things are, one never feels exactly at home here." (The young woman's eyes, when she said this, wandered with a melancholy expression around the endless prairies.)

"But why, then, did you leave Sweden? Was it some touring emigrant agent who lured you out here?"

"No, certainly not. We have never even heard tell of such persons. No, the reason we set out was that we never could pay the taxes and never could save anything."

"Did you have your own land at home?"

"Yes, we had a small *gård* in Småland which barely gave us enough to live on. When the taxes were due in the fall we never had enough for them, and so the police always served a writ of extent and that meant yet more striving and working. It was the same thing over again when the next fall came. At last we saw that conditions would never be different for us at home, and as we had heard that several in the parish who had moved out here were well off and sent home money, we decided that we who are still young and have both the will and the strength to work could also try our luck here."

"How much was your tax at home?"

"It went up to more than a hundred rix-dollars."

"But is it not just as hard to meet the taxes here?"

"Oh, no! Not a bit of it! Here we have eighty acres of good land which cost only \$14.00 and up to now we have paid only \$2.50 a year in taxes."

"That may be true, but this tax will doubtless rise, too."

"Yes, of course, the more we cultivate our land the more the farm will rise in value, and by that the tax rate is set. But it will never be so high that it will be difficult for us to pay it."

"How long have you lived here?"

"Something over two years."

"How much of your eighty acres have you been able to cultivate?"

"So far only fifteen acres, and this has been done gradually. The soil, however, has produced well. The first year we harvested sixty-five bushels, last year a hundred and thirty-seven, and this year we expect to get between two and three hundred bushels of wheat."

"What is your husband's name and where is he now?"

"His name is Henrikson and he is out with the oxen 'breaking up' for a farmer who lives over there," pointing to the other side of the prairie. "When we left Sweden," she continued, "we had from five to six hundred rix-dollars with us from the sale of our belongings. A part went for the passage, and a part we loaned on the voyage to Swedes who said they were in distress. This money we never saw again," she added with a rueful smile. "When we arrived here and took a homestead we had just enough left to buy a pair of oxen and a stove. But during the time when the soil was not productive we had to live as well as to buy grain for sowing. Therefore, my husband has worked at times with his oxen on our own and others' land. When he 'breaks land' for others he gets from two to three dollars a day, and when he is out for eight days, as at present, he brings home with him about twenty dollars, which will go toward living expenses or be put into the farm."

"But have you never experienced anxiety for your daily bread since you came here?"

"No, praise God, food we have had aplenty. And as we are now fixed we could put by enough for every year, and when we have all the eighty acres broken up and cultivated we shall consider ourselves prosperous."

"You have good prospects for the future?"

"Oh, yes, we can't complain. We could never have had it so prosperous at home. Well, so you are going home to Sweden? How nice!"

"You are not entirely happy here, I see that plainly enough," I said and took her hand.

"Happy!" she said and burst into tears. "No, I am not as happy and thankful as I should be, but, the gentleman understands, it is hard to be so alone. The gentleman sees how desolate it is here — and then there is the long, cold winter!"

"I admit it must be hard, but more and more people will come out here to settle and then you will not be alone so much."

"That is true. Besides I have no right to complain, for it was less for our sakes that we set out than in order to provide our children with a decent living, something that we could never have done in Sweden." Here she looked down upon the child she held in her arms and kissed it warmly. "But won't the gentleman come in and see how we have it?" she added, smilingly wiping away her tears.

"Yes, indeed, with the greatest pleasure."

Accordingly, we went in. We had to go down three steps before we came to the dirt floor. The room measured about twelve feet in width by twelve to fourteen feet in length and was something over eight feet high. Just within the door to the left stood a cast-iron stove, an object that is never wanting in America, farther over to the left was a child's bed, in the middle of the floor stood a table and chest, and to the right was a large bed and a sort of cupboard, where several household utensils were kept. The furnishings were completed with two or three chairs. Above the table hung the portrait of Charles XV. From the stove a chimney went up to the center of the hut, where a hole had been broken in the dirt roof. Daylight came in through the door!

Everything was clean, neatly arranged, and homelike. To leave without entertainment was, of course, impossible, so we drank a

basin of pure, unadulterated milk with freshly baked wheat bread.

Two hours quickly fled and it was time to say good-by and continue the journey. It almost hurt to leave this woman in all this solitude. I kissed the children, who looked plump and sturdy, and pressed the hand of the young mother, wishing her good luck and happiness. She thanked me and said slowly, "Remember me to Sweden!" I heard and felt her very heart in the words and I take this method of fulfilling her request.

That day I visited three sod houses, all occupied by Swedes. I found about the same reasons for immigration and the same prospects for the future as in the first. I remained over night in the last one; that is, I wrapped myself up in a blanket and slept on the dirt floor.

He who would set out to visit sod houses in America five to ten years from now will without doubt have to go farther west, for where the sod houses are now one will find instead a well-cultivated region with small plots of trees here and there (out here trees grow ten to twelve feet high in six years) and pretty white-painted houses in which dwell a prosperous people.

The following day, after having met all the Swedes on our route, we came to Wilmoore [*Willmar*], a two-year-old town on the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, named after one of the London directors of this company. His son lived two miles out of town on a fine farm which the father had bought him and where he was expected to atone for the sins of his youth.¹⁰ It was a sort of place of exile. I paid a visit to the young, blasé gallant and was entertained with a bottle of real claret, which tasted divinely after having had so long only the wretched American wares served in the West. In Wilmoore, also, there were plenty of Swedes;

¹⁰ Willmar was named for Leon Willmar, a Belgian who was living in London in 1870, when the town was founded, as the "agent for the European bondholders of the St. Paul and Pacific railroad company." He purchased several hundred acres of land near Foot Lake and presented them to his son, Paul Willmar, "who a few years before had served as a soldier of fortune under Maximilian, the adventurous invader of Mexico." The son lived here for ten years; then he sold his farm and went to live in Belgium. Warren Upham, *Minnesota Geographic Names; Their Origin and Historic Significance*, 272 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 17).

some artisans, some day laborers. The latter worked for \$2.00 to \$2.50 a day. Living expenses were the same as at most of the other places I had visited, about \$4.50 a week for board and room. In Wilmoore, as is customary in the vicinity of the railroad company's stations, there was a roomy immigrant home where the immigrants could live free of charge while they sought land.

From here we took the train for Breckenridge, a small town lying on the border of Dakota Territory, and for the present the terminal of the St. Paul and Pacific line. The road went through one continuous and boundless flat prairie, and only here and there, at quite great distances, could one discern a solitary house where some bold pioneer had settled. At Breckenridge, however, there were some trees, for the Red River flows past this place and in America the banks of every stream, yes, even the smallest brook, are wooded.

In Breckenridge, which contains about fifteen or twenty houses, there were only three Swedes; namely, two brothers by the name of Petterson and their sister. They ran the town's principal hotel, and ran it *well*, which is to say a great deal in America, at least in the western parts. Here we were entertained (look at the map and see if it sounds believable) with oysters and champagne and in the evening a supper [*sexå*], as Swedish as possible, was prepared in our honor. I must add that the oysters, as everywhere in the Far West, do not, as one would suppose, come in the shell, but are removed and preserved in air-tight tin cans. Seldom does any trace remain of the fine, salt sea flavor.

Here, as I said before, the railroad stopped, but as I very much desired to see the northern part of Minnesota we bought stage tickets in order to reach the Northern Pacific Railroad. From Breckenridge to Moorhead, the station on this line to which we planned to go, the distance was fifty English miles. Never will I forget that journey! It was not enough that the stage—if one can give that name to the primitive conveyance we used—was designed for six persons at the most and that we stuffed in nine, but moreover the road was in such a terrible condition (where there was any road to be found!) that it was more by luck than skill that we arrived in safety. Eight or ten times we had to get out at the driver's request and wade through deep mudholes

because he could not guarantee that the wagon would not upset. In addition, as in all swampy regions in the American West, the mosquitoes appeared in such multitudes that they nearly darkened the sky. After a journey of twelve hours we arrived at last in Moorhead, tired out and completely covered with mosquito bites. We met the governor of the state, Mr. Austin, who planned to make the same trip, but who, after he heard our account of the journey, discreetly turned about and made a considerable detour. I met but one Swede in Moorhead. He had left the fatherland twelve years earlier and was now connected with the local government.

We left Moorhead by rail for the not far distant town of Glyndon, a purely American town. Here we found three or four wooden houses, which were primitive in the highest degree, while the remainder of the town was composed of tents. On one of these, *Continental Hotel* was displayed in big letters. Thither we removed our luggage, but we were saved from having to sleep there, for we were courteously invited to stay with Colonel de Graeff, on whom we had called.¹¹ Colonel de Graeff (or the "Western Railroad King," as he is known because he built, and continues to build, most of the railroads in the Northwest) was an especially polite and courteous man. The next day he took us out to a railroad that was under construction and here we were given a clear idea of how the American railroads are laid out on the flat prairie. The road is first surveyed by two engineers, after them come two others who examine the condition of the ground, and finally the laborers appear. The first gang throws up a little sand and dirt, the next gang lays the ties, while the next brings up the rails. The colonel explained that with a hundred men he could build over two English miles of road a day on a flat prairie and that his expenses here reached twenty to twenty-five thousand dollars per mile, all materials included. The engineers received from \$100 to \$150 a month and the laborers from \$2.00 to \$2.50 a day.

¹¹ Andrew de Graff was a railroad builder who came to Minnesota in 1857 to construct the Transit Railroad between Winona and St. Peter. He died in St. Paul in 1894. Warren Upham and Rose B. Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies, 1655-1912*, 171 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 14).

Colonel de Graeff is said to be worth two million dollars, all of it gained in a relatively short time by such enterprises.

Glydon is a "temperance town"; that is to say the town's inhabitants have pledged themselves not to use spirituous liquors nor to rent out, sell, nor build for anyone who is not an absolute friend of temperance. It is well-known fact that extremes generally do not lead to the desired goal, for just beyond the boundaries of the little town a Swede and two Norwegians had established "saloons," which were visited frequently, especially by the railroad workers. In Glyndon, too, I became acquainted with those grasshoppers that come to Minnesota as well as to other parts of America in immense numbers and destroy all vegetation in a couple of days wherever they go. The air was so full of them that the very sun appeared dim, and the ground was so thickly covered by these unappetizing looking creatures that in one place I counted about two hundred and fifty in a square foot. They were one and a half inches long and extremely disgusting looking. In the evening the white walls of the tents were so thickly covered with grasshoppers that one could scarcely see any of the canvas.

Ten to fifteen miles from Glyndon on the way to Duluth we entered the so-called "park region," a glorious country with small natural parks, pretty lakes, and luxuriant, level land. We arrived at last in Duluth, from whence we returned to St. Paul on the Lake Superior and Mississippi road after a journey of nearly three weeks.

CHAPTER 14

CHRISTMAS IN A SOD HOUSE

After about a four months' absence from Minnesota — during which time I traveled through Iowa, Nebraska, Illinois, and Wisconsin, and visited the larger cities on the eastern coast of North America, as well as crossed Canada in different directions — I returned to "the land of ten thousand lakes" in the middle of December, 1872. When last I was there waving fields of grain greeted my eye, and green pastures, and a happy, industrious people who joyfully turned to account the rich harvest with which the state had been blessed. Now all was changed. Winter had

spread its white blanket over the fields, the trees had discarded their green dress and taken on their hoarfrost attire, sparkling in the sun. No more could the sailing clouds mirror themselves in the sky-blue waters; even the proud "father of waters," the mighty Mississippi, had been forced to let himself be imprisoned by the conqueror who now wielded the scepter. That the winters are severe here cannot be denied, and the winter of 1872 could reasonably be counted as one of the coldest in the memory of man. But the air here is thin and clear, and when one sees the blue smoke rising in coquettish rings from the log cabins at the edge of some huge pine forest, and at the same time sees the *bonde* out in the wood lot busy with the chopping, one thinks one is seeing again the fresh, charming picture that so often meets the eye of the traveler in our northland provinces in the winter. It is not the winter itself that the settler out on the thinly populated prairie looks forward to with dread, for the harvest has been garnered and sold, the larders are full, and the cattle have been lavishly supplied with fodder for the period during which they cannot go out. No, it is winter's companion, the terrible blizzard, that he fears. And, in truth, he has reason to. Death is the inevitable lot of him who is foolhardy enough to intrust himself to it. The blizzards here, as in other parts of America, are not to be compared with even the worst of our snowstorms at home, for they spring up more suddenly, and the howling storm, which with terrifying speed races across the endless plains, drives before it a whirling mass of fine snow particles that take away the breath, quickly cover up every track, and make it impossible to see even a distance of a few ells. He who permits himself to be surprised out on the prairies by such a storm is truly in a pitiable situation. The icy wind numbs his limbs, he loses the direction he should follow to reach his goal, and in despair he at last sinks down in the snow drifts either to die or to be found long after the blizzard has passed in a condition that would leave scant hope for his recovery. Happily these blizzards are not a daily occurrence, although they are unfortunately not infrequent. This fact and the care that the settlers soon learn to take make serious accidents very uncommon.

Much activity prevailed in St. Paul when I got there. The handsome stores were filled with newly arrived articles, which were tasteful and often rather costly, intended as gifts for the coming holidays. There was a brisk sale of Christmas trees in the markets, and those streets along which the retailers had their shops were crowded with conveyances belonging to near-by farmers who were in town to buy gifts or delicacies for the Christmas table. It is not only the Scandinavians who celebrate Christmas here in America in a true ancient northern fashion, but even the Americans themselves have in late years begun to give more and more attention to this festival of the children and have as nearly as possible taken our method of celebration as a pattern. For example, most of them use fir trees with candles, confections, and other decorations, and so far as the number and costliness of the presents are concerned they often display a liberality that would amaze us Swedes. These Christmas presents are given in various ways. In the public schools, especially for younger children, the school officials usually arrange a huge fir, which stands for about eight days. On this tree the children's parents and friends hang small presents, which are distributed by the school-teacher. In the home the presents are sent with a message if the giver is someone outside the family, or they are distributed by a dressed-up Christmas mummer, who here goes under the name of "Santa Claus." Still another custom exists, although it is not used so commonly perhaps as the first two. If there is reason to expect presents, a stocking is hung up at bedtime in some convenient and well-known place and in it in the morning will be found the expected presents. Not a trace of our traditional *lutfisk* and rice porridge is found.¹² There is no special menu for Christmas Eve. On the other hand there are few American homes in which the customary turkey is not served on the following, or Christmas, day.

¹² *Lutfisk* is cod prepared for a Christmas delicacy by being buried for days in wood ashes. Today this Scandinavian delicacy has been appropriated to considerably wider uses than the original one, as the following item from the *St. James Independent* for October 13, 1927, will show: "One ton of lufefisk has been ordered for 'Lufefisk Day' at St. James, Friday, Oct. 21."

As I had planned to spend my Christmas Eve with some of my countrymen out on the prairie, I left St. Paul a few days before Christmas and went by the St. Paul and Pacific one hundred English miles northwest to the Litchfield station. Here, after some trouble, I was fortunate enough to secure a sled in which I set out over the prairie to the west. There was no road, of course. The level country which I entered first lay like an enormous white cloth spread out before my eyes, and the only guide I had for the direction I was to take was a small pocket compass and the blue smoke columns that here and there at a considerable distance arose from the log cabins. The way was not particularly difficult to traverse, for on the flat prairie the snow distributes itself comparatively evenly. But when, after twenty or thirty miles, I came out on the rolling prairie, I met with greater difficulties. In some places the snow had drifted in considerable quantities between the hillocks, and had it not been for the hardy horses and the extraordinary strong conveyances that they have in the West, I should have had extreme difficulty in making headway.

Toward nightfall on the day before Christmas Eve I perceived far off the smoke from a human habitation, which, from what I could make out at a distance, should be a sod house. I was soon there and found that this, in truth, was the case, although it was one of the very best kind. That is to say, in this case, the owner had only half dug himself into the ground. Three tiers of thick timbers were laid above ground and over these there was placed a roof with a slight pitch. One lived, so to speak, half under and half above the ground, and thus it became possible for the occupant to get daylight through a small window, which was sawed out of the south wall formed by the three timbers mentioned above. About twenty paces from the dwelling house was the granary and, annexed to it, the stable, also a half sod house, which was occupied by two oxen and a cow. Only a little grain was on hand; that which was not necessary for winter use had been sold, as usual, during Indian summer. The sod hay barn, on the other hand, seemed to be well filled with cattle fodder. I had not steered wrong, for I had reached the house of the man I sought, Jan Erikson from Wermland, who had been in America for three years and for the last two years had been living on his large eighty-acre

homestead. I was received by him and his friendly wife with that cordiality which I have been accustomed to find among my countrymen on the prairie. Nor did I need to put forth any request that I might stay over Christmas Eve, for I was anticipated in this by my friendly hosts, who simply but heartily bade me remain and help myself to whatever they had to offer. To the two children, a girl of seven named Anna and a boy of three, Eric, the visit of a strange gentleman seemed particularly surprising, but the sight of some packages I had brought along, which the dwelling's smallness made it impossible for me to hide, soon made us the best of friends.

Early in the morning of the day before Christmas my hosts were at work, and when I arose I found a huge ham already sputtering over the fire, while outside I heard my host's great ax blows, for he was busy getting the necessary Christmas wood ready. I hurried out and was met with a picture that was for me entirely new and particularly striking. The sun was about twenty degrees above the wavy horizon of snow and from the snow-clad tops of countless hillocks the sunbeams were thrown in a dazzling bewilderment all around. Yet, except for this tiny world in which I now found myself, I could not discern another sign of human presence than two columns of smoke, which arose, nearly perpendicularly, from the horizon, one in the northwest and one in the southwest. The first, explained my host, came from a sod house that was occupied the previous spring by the family of a German farmer who came from Illinois, where he had paid too much for his land and after two years of fruitless toil had been forced to leave everything with empty hands. In the other lived a Swedish family, a man and his wife and one child, who had lived there for a year and a half. After the wood was chopped and carried in, a task in which the two children took part with a will, the cattle were fed and watered, and a small sheaf of unthreshed wheat was set out for the few birds that at times circled around the house, in accordance with the lovely old Swedish custom.

With these and other chores the morning passed, and right after twelve o'clock we were invited in by the housewife for the midday meal. The cloth that covered the plain homemade table was cer-

tainly not of the finest, but it was whole and clean, and the defects of arrangement that a fault-finding observer would have been able to point out were plentifully outweighed in my eyes by the unfeigned, cordial friendliness with which I was bade to help myself to what the house had to offer. For the rest, one should have felt ashamed not to be satisfied. The bread that we dipped in the kettle was freshly baked and tasty,¹³ and the fat chicken that was later served in a sort of stewed pie form, which awakened especially the children's delight, had clearly not fared ill during the short time allotted him to live. And so came the afternoon with its small arrangements for the evening meal and the Christmas table, for this could not be omitted. There was no Christmas tree, for fir trees are not yet planted in this part of Minnesota, but two candles stood on the white covered table and round these were placed a multitude of Christmas cakes in various shapes made by the housewife and such small presents as these pioneers were able to afford, to which I added those I had brought. Nor were *lutfish* and rice porridge to be found on the table, but the ham which took the place of honor in their stead banished all doubt that the settler's labor and sacrifice had received its reward.

The meal was eaten in the happiest of moods and afterward the few presents were distributed to the children. The gifts were neither costly nor tasteful, but they were *gifts* and that was all that was necessary. On the wooden horse I had brought, the little three-year-old galloped over the hard-packed dirt floor of the sod house with as much joy and happiness undoubtedly as the pampered child upon one polished and upholstered. All was joy and thankfulness, and when later the head of the family read a chapter from the Bible about the Christ child I am certain that from the hearts of these poor people there rose many warm thanksgivings to Him who smoothed their path and gave them courage and strength to conquer the hardships of the New World.

Outside the snow fell slowly and spread its white Christmas mantle over the endless prairie. Now and then a snowflake fastened itself on the single window of the sod house, its curtains

¹³ *Doppa i grytan* is a ritual of the Swedish Christmas. The members of the household, including the servants, gather about the boiling kettles of meat, in which each dips his piece of bread.

faded by the summer suns, and quickly dissolved and disappeared as if its icy heart had melted with joy at sight of the peace that reigned within. And later, from the corner of the room where the housewife's kind hands had made my bed, I heard the small voice of the youngest child, still clutching his wooden horse, repeating after his mother, "Good night, kind Jesus." Then it was I realized in full God's infinite wisdom when He willed to apportion "the palace for the rich, but joy for the poor."

CHAPTER 15

A DAY IN THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE

Early in March, 1873, the Minnesota legislature ended its work for the year and the representatives returned to their homes in different parts of the vast state. No great questions took up the time of the representatives in this session, except possibly that of the impeachment of the state treasurer for the unconstitutional use of the state's funds¹⁴ and a proposal to amend the constitution by making the legislature assemble biennially instead of annually. This proposal, oddly enough, went through, although it was vigorously opposed by the minority, who upheld the importance of constant control in a new country of such hasty growth as Minnesota. Like all approved proposals for amendments to the constitution, it had to be confirmed later by the people at a general election.

Scandals connected with the balance sheets of officials may just as well be accepted as the order of the day here in America and will no doubt continue until it is understood that a good official must be paid sufficiently. And in the same way, continuity in at least some of the branches of the state's administration is just as necessary as it is healthy. The present impeached and discharged state treasurer had, under a bond of not less than two hundred thousand dollars, a yearly salary of a paltry thousand dollars, a sum which any able-bodied workman can easily earn. This man, under no actual control, had the state's entire funds in his hands. The result is easy to imagine. Naturally he could not live on a

¹⁴ An account of "The Seeger Impeachment" appears in William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 3: 357-362 (St. Paul, 1926).

thousand dollars, and he therefore appropriated some of the state's money for the purpose of augmenting his income. As the rate of interest is high here, one to two per cent a month, it was not difficult for him to take advantage of his position, although his business speculations were not always of the sort that coincided with the state's interests. The wholesome result of the scandal, however, was that the state treasurer's salary was raised from one to three thousand dollars.

Minnesota's lawmaking body is divided into two parts, as in all the other states; namely, the *Senate* and the *House of Representatives*. Since it would without doubt be of interest to get some knowledge about the organization of a lawmaking body and its duties so far West, I shall touch upon the subject here in a few words. I feel that I must mention that Minnesota only became a state in 1858 and thus, naturally, one cannot expect that the parliamentary forms should have had time to become well-rounded and solid as in older countries.

All elections to the Senate as well as to the House of Representatives are direct. For this purpose the state is divided into districts. Districts of at least five thousand inhabitants each elect a senator while districts of at least two thousand inhabitants each elect a representative. At the present time the Senate is composed of 41 members and the House of Representatives of 126.¹⁵ The members of the House of Representatives are elected for *one* year while a senator can sit from *one* to *four* years. The senatorial districts are numbered from one on. Every senator who is elected from a district with an odd number leaves office after the end of the first year, but he can thereafter be reelected for two succeeding years. This is also the case with senators elected from districts with even numbers, who leave after two years of service.¹⁶ For

¹⁵ The apportionment for the House was 106 members in 1872.

¹⁶ Nisbeth evidently based his statement on the original clause in the constitution providing for the election of senators, and he does not seem to have understood that these officials were elected for times of varying length only to start the machinery of government. The term of representatives was extended to two years and of senators to four years in an amendment to the constitution ratified on November 6, 1877, which forms article 4, section 24, of the present constitution.

membership in both the Senate and the House of Representatives no qualifications are required other than suffrage in the state and residence of a year in the state and six months — immediately preceding the election — in the district represented. The election is held in October and the legislature meets in the middle of the following January, after which the customary working period is sixty days. The Senate and the House choose their secretary and clerk, each chamber has two of each. The House has its speaker, while in the Senate the lieutenant governor presides.

Although the government officials in America are in general very poorly paid, which naturally results in fraud on every side, on the other hand, the members of the legislative bodies are paid enough so that they do not have to go home empty handed. The president of the Senate and the speaker of the House each receive ten dollars a day and traveling expenses to and from the legislature (such notorious traveling expenses as certain members of the second chamber in Sweden demand are not tolerated here); and the senators and representatives are paid five dollars a day, and they receive free travel back and forth and about twenty dollars for stationery. The two secretaries in each of the bodies of the legislature are paid ten dollars a day, and the assisting clerks, also two in each house, five dollars a day. Of course the living expenses here are thirty and possibly fifty per cent higher than in Stockholm, but not more, and the salary of each member of the legislature is relatively greater than that which the members of the second chamber at home enjoy.

The business of the legislature is transacted in about the same manner as at home, though possibly with less care and perfection. Just as at home at the first meeting of the legislature a large number of committees are appointed, at least five times as many as we have. To these the various motions are submitted after the first reading; later they are returned to the legislature to be read a second and third time. No record of the discussions is kept and in the voting no ballots are used. They are satisfied to let the secretary record the *ayes* and *noes* of those present and later to submit the results.

The Senate chamber and the House of Representatives are both comfortably and neatly furnished, particularly the Senate chamber,

where each senator has a comfortable, upholstered armchair before a neat desk, which he has at his own disposal. Of course, there are carpets in both chambers. In the House of Representatives there are two armchairs before each desk. The public gallery is at least three times as large as the one in the parliament house in Stockholm, and is covered with carpets and furnished with armchairs for the comfort of the visitors.

It is an entirely natural thing that in a state where the Scandinavian element is so strongly represented as in Minnesota the same element should be represented in the legislature, and this year there are not less than three *Swedes* and one *Norwegian* in the Senate and three *Swedes* and eight *Norwegians* in the House of Representatives. They do not make themselves heard much,—except possibly in the general murmur, which here often attains deafening volume,—but are respected by the Americans for their firmness of principle and their honesty of purpose.

In addition to the chambers of both legislative bodies and several smaller rooms where the committees work, the Capitol also houses the executive departments, including the governor, his secretary, the secretary of state and his assistant, the state auditor and state treasurer with their assistants, the attorney general, whose duties most nearly compare with those of the solicitor general at home, and the supreme court. The governor, whose power in many instances is greater than a king's in a constitutional monarchy, draws far from a large or even a sufficient salary, for his fixed pay is only three thousand dollars. He cannot make personal use of the four thousand dollars which the state pays toward the yearly expenses connected with his office. His private secretary, whom the state pays, has a salary of fifteen hundred dollars. The salary of the secretary of state amounts to about two thousand dollars without fees, the state auditor's to three thousand dollars, the attorney general's to one thousand dollars plus thirteen hundred dollars for service (he also has the right to handle private law suits), and the three permanent members of the highest court receive up to three thousand dollars yearly. When one reflects that these highest officers of the state seldom hold their offices more than four years and often only two, one must admit that during the time they are in office at the expense of their own inter-

ests they receive particularly meager compensation. This cannot, however, be said of the Capitol's watchman, who, in addition to being surer of holding his job, enjoys a salary of fifteen hundred dollars. This watchman does not work in the assembly rooms, but functions only as a sort of fire warden and doorkeeper for the entire Capitol. Those who work as watchmen or pages in the chambers are young boys about twelve or fourteen years of age and sometimes younger, often the sons of well-to-do people. They usually receive two dollars a day and, aside from the duties connected with the position, these boys are supposed also to learn something about the forms of lawmaking.

The newspaper reporters have their comfortable table and arm-chairs to the left of the speaker.

During my visit to the various departments in the Capitol and to the legislature I was received everywhere with that courteous friendliness which one usually finds among Americans. It almost seemed as if these people considered it a duty to make me as familiar as I cared to be with the various details of their government. When I saw with what simplicity the current business was executed and with what politeness and readiness visitors were treated, I could not help but make comparisons in my own mind between the officials in Minnesota's Capitol and those who are found lodged in the numerous government offices in Stockholm.

THE INFORMATION BUREAU

MINNEHAHA FALLS AND LONGFELLOW'S " HIAWATHA "

TO THE EDITOR:

In the September number of MINNESOTA HISTORY you publish the letter of Alex Hesler in the manuscript collection of the Minnesota Historical Society apropos of Longfellow's "Hiawatha" and the daguerreotype of Minnehaha Falls taken by Hesler which Longfellow had in his possession at the time the poem was written.

It is an interesting, not to say romantic incident; but the statement in the Hesler letter that Longfellow took the daguerreotype "out in the woods with him and from it conceived the thought and poem of Hiawatha" gives a wrong impression of the origin of the poem.

Longfellow himself in his "Notes" in the first edition of *The Song of Hiawatha* (Boston, 1855) states (p. 299):

The Song of Hiawatha.—This Indian Edda—if I may so call it—is founded on a tradition prevalent among the North American Indians, of a personage of miraculous birth, who was sent among them to clear their rivers, forests, and fishing-grounds, and to teach them the arts of peace. He was known among different tribes by the several names of Michabou, Chiabo, Manabozo, Tarenyawagon, and Hiawatha. Mr. Schoolcraft gives an account of him in his *Algic Researches*, Vol. I, p. 134; and in his *History, Condition, and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, Part III, p. 314, may be found the Iroquois form of the tradition, derived from the verbal narrations of an Onondaga chief.

Into this old tradition I have woven other curious Indian legends, drawn chiefly from the various and valuable writings of Mr. Schoolcraft, to whom the literary world is greatly indebted for his indefatigable zeal in rescuing from oblivion so much of the legendary lore of the Indians.

The scene of the poem is among the Ojibways on the southern shore of Lake Superior, in the region between the Pictured Rocks and the Grand Sable.

Schoolcraft further identified the Hiawatha legend as an Iroquois legend in his *Myth of Hiawatha, and Other Oral Legends* published in 1856 and dedicated to Longfellow (p. 13) :

The myth of the Indians of a remarkable personage, who is called Manabozho by the Algonquins, and Hiawatha by the Iroquois, who was the instructor of the tribes in arts and knowledge, was first related to me in 1822, by the Chippewas of Lake Superior.

On page 303 of the "Notes" in the first edition of *The Song of Hiawatha*, Longfellow quotes also from Mrs. Mary H. Eastman's *Dahcotah; or, Life and Legends of the Sioux Around Fort Snelling*, published in 1849, as follows:

The scenery about Fort Snelling is rich in beauty. The Falls of St. Anthony are familiar to travellers, and to readers of Indian sketches. Between the fort and these falls are the "Little Falls," forty feet in height, on a stream that empties into the Mississippi. The Indians call them Mine-hah-hah, or "laughing waters."

As Dr. Warren Upham has pointed out in his *Minnesota Geographic Names*, 230 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 17), the name "Minnehaha" was the work of white men, although based on Indian roots, and this was probably the first time the name had ever appeared in print. There is no record of an Indian legend about an Indian maiden, beautiful or otherwise, nor about an arrowmaker, ancient or otherwise, residing at Minnehaha Falls. If there were such, Mrs. Eastman would surely have included it in her collection of local Indian legends.

It is quite evident that the general theme of the poem was of Iroquois origin and that the courtship of Minnehaha was an imaginative episode incidental to the main theme. Whether Longfellow first knew of Minnehaha Falls through the Hesler daguerreotype or through Mrs. Eastman's book it is impossible to state. Very likely he had both before him at the time the poem was written, although the Hesler incident is nowhere

mentioned in the "Notes." Be that as it may, it was a happy circumstance which led Longfellow's poetic fancy to the "land of the Dahcotahs,"

Where the Falls of Minnehaha
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,
Laugh and leap into the valley.

E. C. G.

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

The well-known historian, Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, in a recent letter to the editor expresses cordial appreciation of *MINNESOTA HISTORY* and adds, "The annual volumes of *MINNESOTA HISTORY* will be more and more valuable as time goes on; and every effort should be made to induce local libraries, collectors, and individuals to use the magazine as it comes along and also to preserve the files for future generations." One of the difficulties in connection with preserving back numbers of a magazine is the fact that they so easily become scattered. The best plan is to have the numbers for each volume bound, so that it will be possible to place the magazine on one's library shelves in convenient book form. For inclusion in each volume of *MINNESOTA HISTORY* an index and special preliminary pages are regularly printed with a view to facilitating the binding and permanent use of the magazine. The society will be glad to send bound copies of *MINNESOTA HISTORY* at a cost of fifty cents a volume to anyone who will turn in the separate numbers comprising the volumes desired. Missing numbers in any volume will be supplied by the society at fifty cents each so long as they are available.

The society would be glad to receive from its members a few extra copies of the *Twenty-first Biennial Report*, which surveys activities for the years 1919 and 1920. Its supply has been exhausted and it is therefore unable at present to meet demands for copies from libraries and other institutions that desire to have complete files of the society's publications.

Twenty-two additions to the active membership of the society have been made during the quarter ending September 30, 1927. The names of the new members, grouped by counties, follow:

HENNEPIN: Dr. Hilding Berglund, Mrs. Charles M. Case, Frank E. Clark, Victor E. Forrest, Eugene J. Gluek, George B. Lane, Cavour S. Langdon, Rev. Wilhelm Pettersen, Dr. Kenneth A. Phelps, George E. Stilson, Roy W. Swanson, and Glen M. Waters, all of Minneapolis.

OTTER TAIL: Mrs. William L. Patterson of Fergus Falls.

POPE: Rev. M. Casper Johnshoy of Starbuck.

RAMSEY: Charles O. Russell, Dr. Herman R. Russell, and Mrs. Ernest J. Stiefel, all of St. Paul.

RICE: Carl L. Weicht of Northfield.

ST. LOUIS: Walter B. Congdon and P. H. Nelson of Duluth.

STEARNS: Mrs. Harry P. Lufkin of St. Cloud.

STEVENS: George F. Darling of Morris.

The Goodhue County Historical Society became an annual institutional member during the quarter.

The society lost five active members by death during the three months ending September 30: Captain Edgar C. Bowen of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, July 4; Judge Willard L. Comstock of Mankato, July 20; Herbert H. Davis of Marshfield, Oregon, July 18; David P. Jones of Minneapolis, August 3; and Leon C. Warner of Minneapolis, September 28. The deaths of James W. Longley, a corresponding member, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, on March 12, 1922; and of two honorary members, James Ford Rhodes of Boston, on January 22, 1927, and the Reverend William C. Winslow, also of Boston, on February 2, have not previously been reported in the magazine.

The Public Library of White Bear Lake has recently become a subscriber to the society's publications.

During the summer the society published a cumulated *Check List of Minnesota Public Documents Issued from July 1, 1923, to June 30, 1925*, compiled by Gertrude Krausnick and Jacob Hodnefield (39 p.). "The publication of check lists of current Minnesota documents," it is explained in the preface, "was started in 1923. It was obvious that such lists would be useful to librarians and others who are assembling Minnesota materials and to present and future students of Minnesota's history and government; and it was believed that the compilation and publication of the lists would aid the Minnesota Historical Society in its efforts to assemble and preserve an absolutely complete collection of publications of the state, including its various departments, institutions, and affiliated organizations. The lists were published monthly during

the biennium 1923/25 and quickly demonstrated their value. It soon became apparent, however, that as a permanent record the information would be much more valuable in cumulated form, and so the present cumulation was undertaken. It includes everything listed in the twenty-four monthly issues and also some items that were discovered too late for inclusion therein. Beginning with the fiscal year 1925/26, the lists have been issued quarterly instead of monthly, and it is probable that future cumulations will cover four-year periods." Copies of the recently issued cumulation will be sent to members on request.

A list of the members of the society and of schools and libraries that subscribe to its publications is being brought out as number 3 of the society's series of *Handbooks*. The names of active members resident in Minnesota have been arranged by counties.

Professor Krey's article on "Monte Cassino, Metten, and Minnesota," which appeared in the last number of this magazine, is being reprinted in pamphlet form by St. John's University at Collegeville.

During the half year from April 1 to September 30, members of the staff gave a total of twenty-eight talks on Minnesota history and allied subjects before clubs and gatherings of various sorts.

The society, as has become customary, had an exhibit in the state building at the state fair early in September. The special features this year were a trapper's cabin of the fur-trade days, with appropriate setting and furnishings, and a demonstration of the process of cleaning, pressing, and arranging a collection of old manuscripts.

A special exhibit illustrating the development of transportation in Minnesota was recently installed in the society's museum. It consists of models secured from the Great Northern Railway of Red River carts, dog and pony travoïs, and the "William Crooks," Minnesota's first locomotive, in addition to numerous pictures.

During the summer Dr. Nute, the society's curator of manuscripts, took advantage of a vacation trip East to visit Quebec, New York City, and Washington to examine certain collections of manuscripts containing material of Minnesota interest. In Quebec

she was given access to the archdiocesan archives in the palace of the archbishop and found numerous letters written by Monsignor Provencher, the priest in charge of the Catholic missionary work in the Red River Valley for many years after 1818, and she arranged to have transcripts made of some seventy letters for the society's collection. In New York she obtained photostatic copies of certain letters from Minnesota missionaries printed in the *Oberlin Evangelist*, a file of which is in the possession of the New York Historical Society. Though the Minnesota Historical Society also possesses a file it is unfortunately incomplete. In Washington Dr. Nute searched for missionary data in the archives of the bureau of Indian affairs and found considerable valuable material not only on missionary work but also on other phases of Minnesota history in the thirties and forties. Photostatic copies of the documents of special value will be obtained.

The number of visitors to the society's museum during the week of the state fair totaled 2,173, surpassing the fair-week attendance of all previous years since 1920.

Mr. Babcock, curator of the society's museum, was the guest of the Milwaukee Public Museum on an archeological expedition conducted during the week of July 5. The party, under the direction of Mr. W. C. McKern, charted a group of sixty-two effigy and conical mounds near Minnesota Junction, Wisconsin, and excavated a few representative ones. The expedition was undertaken in the furtherance of a project to survey a belt of Wisconsin territory for culture areas. Evidence of the use of the effigy mounds for burial purposes was found; but very few artifacts came to light. The absence of artifacts occasioned no disappointment, but was in itself regarded as an interesting revelation of the burial customs of the people who built the huge animal and bird mounds comprising the group.

Mr. Babcock conducted the annual tour of students attending the summer session of the University of Minnesota to Fort Snelling and Mendota on July 16. Stops were made at the old Round Tower at the fort and at the Sibley House in Mendota.

Miss Margaret D. Murray, a graduate of Hamline University, has been appointed reference assistant in the society's library to

fill the position made vacant by the resignation of Miss Elizabeth Ewing. Miss Murray took up her duties on September 1.

At a stated meeting of the executive council on October 10, Mr. Edward C. Gale of Minneapolis was elected a member of the council and Mrs. Charles E. Furness of St. Paul first vice president of the society to fill the vacancies occasioned by the death of Mr. Edward B. Young of St. Paul. Professor Lester B. Shippee of the University of Minnesota gave a talk on "American Interests in the Caribbean" and the following memorial sketch of the late Judge Lorin Cray, prepared by Mr. Thomas Hughes of Mankato, was presented.

LORIN CRAY

Lorin Cray was a son of Delevan and Charlotte (Chappel) Cray, who were natives of Vermont and of Scotch ancestry. The parents, soon after their marriage, located in the town of Mooers, Clinton County, New York, where the subject of this memoir was born on October 19, 1844. The family removed to Winnebago County, Wisconsin, in 1849, and thence in October, 1859, to a farm in Pleasant Mound Township, Blue Earth County, Minnesota.

At the age of seventeen years, on August 17, 1862, young Cray enlisted in Company D, Ninth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, and he served in the Sioux and Civil wars with this regiment. At the battle of Nashville, Tennessee, he was severely wounded in the shoulder on December 15, 1864. On August 24, 1865, at the close of the war, he was honorably discharged and he then returned to his home in Blue Earth County.

He received a good academic education, and in 1872 he became a law student in the office of Judge M. J. Severance and Judge D. A. Dickinson at Mankato, and three years later he was admitted to the bar. He first practised his profession at Lake Crystal, but in 1887 he removed to Mankato. He was attorney for the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha Railroad for twenty-three years and for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad for ten years. He was elected judge of the sixth judicial district of Minnesota and entered upon the discharge of his duties on January 1, 1900. He was reelected for a second term, but in May, 1908, he resigned the judgeship in order to devote his whole time to the fast-growing business of the Mankato National Citizens Bank, of which he had been made president two years before. This position he held until his death, which occurred on March 3, 1927.

Judge Cray was not only an able lawyer, a learned jurist, and an efficient, successful business man and banker, but also an active leader of men. He served for a time as president of the Mankato

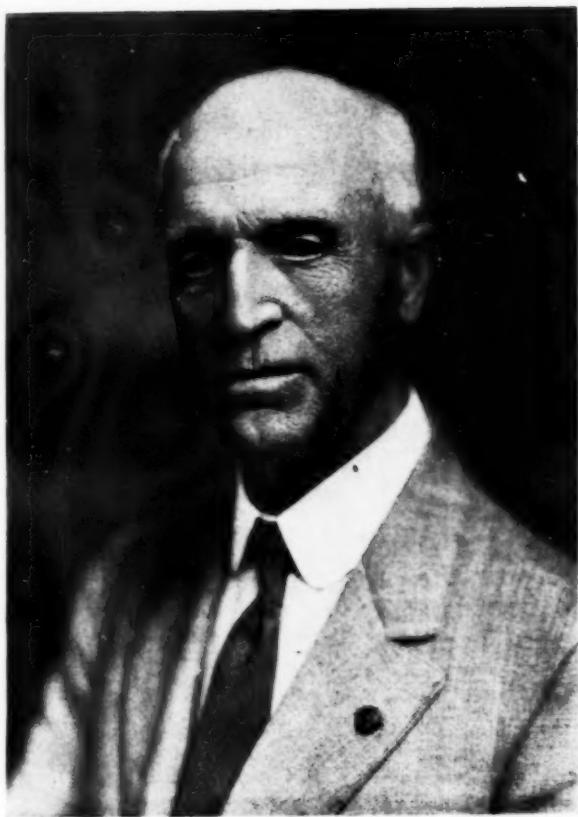
board of education, president of the Blue Earth County Territorial Pioneers' Association, president of the Blue Earth County Historical Society, a member of the executive council of the Minnesota Historical Society, and president of the congregation and chairman of the board of trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Mankato. He was an active and enthusiastic promoter of Bethany College, of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian associations, of the Social Science Club, and of every institution and movement for the uplift and betterment of the community in which he lived.

He was twice married — first, in 1869, to Sarah Trimble, who died in January, 1890, and second, on September 6, 1892, to Lulu Murphy, a daughter of Captain A. J. Murphy of Lake Crystal. Mrs. Cray passed away on August 1, 1927.

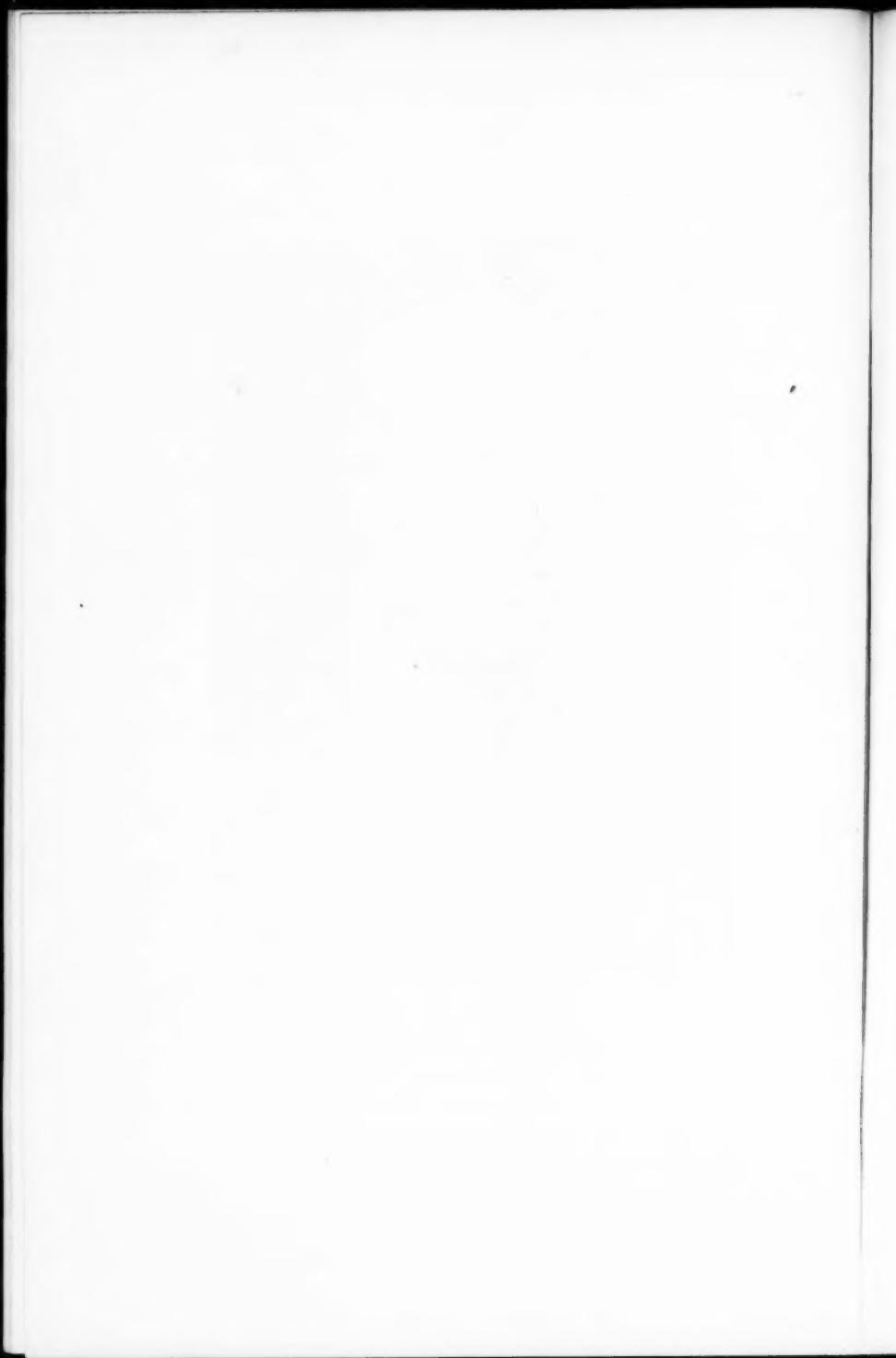
Judge Lorin Cray has been for about a half century a prominent figure and an active, vital force in business, civic, social, and religious life. His loss will long be felt and his large place in the community will be hard to fill.

ACCESSIONS

Several libraries and historical societies have recently coöperated in a plan to secure photographic copies of manuscript maps in the French archives, through the agency of Professor Louis Karpinski of the University of Michigan. As one of the subscribers to the project the society has recently received the entire set of almost seven hundred sheets. Some two hundred of these maps relate to the period of the American Revolution and depict the forts and topography of the regions in which the French military officials were interested as allies of the colonists. Others relate to the French régime in Canada, along the lower Mississippi, in the Illinois country, and about the Great Lakes; and many of these are of special interest for Minnesota history. They show the "recent discoveries" of La Vérendrye, Le Sueur, Jolliet, and other French explorers; the sites of Jesuit missions; the locations of Indian tribes; the area of conflict between the English and the French around Hudson Bay; and details of the geographic knowledge that Europeans had in the period of French control concerning the Minnesota region. One of the maps shows a French post at the outlet of Lake Vermilion; another seems to indicate a Jesuit mission near the site of Duluth; several mention the big rock at



Lorin Braly.



Mille Lacs; and many reveal the sites of the French forts on the boundary waters and about Lake Pepin. One of the maps, dating apparently from about 1680, shows the Falls of St. Anthony without name.

Among the transcripts recently received from the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions is a report of Samuel W. Pond, dated at Traverse des Sioux on September 12, 1849, which tells in general of the status of the missions of the board among the Sioux and in particular of the influence of the American Fur Company in thwarting the purposes of the missionaries.

A transcript of an interesting diary, kept by Mitchell Young Jackson during a trip from Indiana to Minnesota in 1854 and containing descriptions of and comments upon St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Stillwater, has been presented by his grandson, Mr. R. A. Jackson of Minneapolis. The writer of the diary eventually settled in the St. Croix Valley and kept a long series of diaries which, it is hoped, will ultimately be made available in the society's collections.

A collection of manuscripts and printed miscellany and pictures, largely of Winona interest, has been received from Mr. Charles Crapser of Minneapolis. The letters, some of which were written or signed by Alexander Ramsey, James A. Tawney, Knute Nelson, Tams Bixby, and other political leaders, apparently were assembled by a collector of autographs, but they contain important material for the student of political history. He will also welcome the political posters, broadsides, and ballots, while the theater and concert programs and pictures will be of value to the student of social life.

Recent gifts of museum objects illustrative of domestic life include costumes from Miss Eva Smith of St. Paul; a long-handled frying pan, a whale oil lamp, a collapsible bootjack, a brown crockery bottle, and an accordion from Mr. Max Distel of Le Sueur; a folding skein reel or swift from the Home for Children and Aged Women of Minneapolis, through its superintendent; and a

large walnut wardrobe of the period of the seventies from the heirs of the late Mrs. N. H. Winchell of Minneapolis.

To the society's military collection have been added a Civil War officer's uniform, received from Mrs. Margaret Calladine of Minneapolis; an officer's uniform coat, a captain's shoulder straps, a hat cord, and collar ornaments of the Civil War period, presented by Mr. Louie E. Banwart of Anoka; a Civil War sabre and military sash, from Mrs. R. B. Moore of Minneapolis; and the World War service flag of Synnove Lodge No. 5 of the Daughters of Norway, presented by the lodge through Mrs. Jacob Warwick of St. Paul.

A mariner's compass used in the early American trade with China has been given to the society by Mrs. James F. Jackson of Cleveland, Ohio.

A grooved stone ax that was found near Lamberton in 1902 has been added to the society's archeological collection by the Reverend Elmer H. Johnson of Billings, Montana.

A *voyageur's* ax that was dredged up from Lake Vermilion some ten years ago has been presented to the society by Mr. C. N. Ironside of Duluth. That good steel went into such tools is evidenced by the fact that Mr. Ironside has used the ax on several recent camping trips.

A skin of the rare Mexican bird of paradise, a kind used in ceremonial Indian regalia, has been presented by Mr. David W. Morrison of St. Paul.

A large framed group picture of the Hennepin County Medical Society of 1899 has been presented by Dr. Peter M. Holl of Minneapolis.

The library has recently acquired a printed *Guide to the Lands of the First Division of the Saint Paul and Pacific Railroad Company. Branch Line* (St. Paul, 1870. 23 p.) It contains a number of interesting maps, and these, with the accompanying text, supply a valuable source of information on the railroad's work in promoting settlement. The lands advertised totaled five hundred thousand acres between St. Paul and Watab.

NEWS AND COMMENT

The *Pageant of America: A Pictorial History of the United States*, now being published in fifteen volumes by the Yale University Press under the editorship of Dr. Ralph H. Gabriel, well deserves the subtitle given it, for each volume is made up of a series of well-selected pictures of wide range, with judicious introductory and explanatory matter. Some idea of the general plan may be gained from the titles of the seven volumes published up to the present: *Adventures in the Wilderness* (vol. 1), *Toilers of Land and Sea* (vol. 3), *The Epic of Industry* (vol. 5), *Builders of the Republic* (vol. 8), *The American Spirit in Letters* (vol. 11), *The American Spirit in Art* (vol. 12), and *The American Spirit in Architecture* (vol. 13). In the volume entitled *Toilers of Land and Sea*, by Dr. Gabriel, there is much pictorial and explanatory material about the farmers of the Middle West, the progress of agricultural science, farm machinery at different periods, and the "agrarian crusade," though comparatively few of the pictures are of direct Minnesota interest. A number of interesting Minnesota views are included in the volume on *The American Spirit in Architecture*, by Talbot F. Hamlin. Among these are one of old Fort Snelling and a reproduction of J. D. Larpeinteur's pen sketch of an early log house in St. Paul. An old-time Minnesota "dam and logway" is among the pictures in Malcolm Keir's *The Epic of Industry*. A remarkable colored map showing the distribution of the American Indians in the French period appears in *Adventurers in the Wilderness*, by Clark Wissler, Constance L. Skinner, and William Wood. A section dealing with the "Indians of the Plains" has views of Sioux Indians; an interesting picture of a buffalo pound; a reproduction of Seth Eastman's picture of Indians playing a game of lacrosse, the original of which is in the Corcoran Gallery; an imaginative picture of Radisson and Groseilliers' "farthest west" in 1659; and a reproduction of a picture of "Dulhut at Little Portage" in 1679, from a mural painting by C. C. Rosenkranz. A map illustrating the expansion of New France in America in the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries shows a number of Minnesota forts, but omits Fort Beauharnois and the short-lived Fort L'Huillier.

The scope of a volume entitled *The Green Rising* by W. B. Bizzell (New York, 1926. 269 p.) is indicated by its subtitle: "An Historical Survey of Agrarianism, with Special Reference to the Organized Efforts of the Farmers of the United States to Improve Their Economic and Social Status." Agrarianism, according to the author, means an organized effort by farmers to secure a redistribution of land or "the establishment by law of conditions more favorable to the use and occupation of land." Mr. Bizzell deals with American agrarianism against a wide background, for he sketches the agrarian revolutions in the past and analyzes agrarian tendencies in Europe and Mexico before dealing with the American movement. After tracing the genesis of agrarianism in the United States and the influence of land policies and the tariff upon the movement, the author sketches the history of agrarian parties, and at the end of the volume he summarizes the results of agrarianism. The sweep of the book is broad and the details are few. Perhaps its chief value lies in the approach that it makes to a subject often seen from restricted local points of view.

Many interesting items relating to the Northwest are brought together in an article on "The Western Sea in the Jesuit Relations," by C. S. Kingston, published in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* for June. Passages from two Jesuit letters written by Father Nau in 1734 and 1735 tell of Father Aulneau, the priest who accompanied the La Vérendrye expedition and who was among the Frenchmen massacred on an island in the Lake of the Woods in 1736. One of them contains an interesting explanation of why the French search for the western sea failed. "The western sea would have been discovered long ago if people had wished it," wrote Father Nau in 1735. "Monsieur the Count de Maurepas is right when he says that the officials in Canada are not looking for the western sea but for the sea of beaver."

A book of considerable value for western American history is Baron Marc de Villiers' *La découverte du Missouri et l'histoire du*

Fort d'Orléans (1673-1728) (Paris, 1925. 138 p.). In the first part, which deals with the discovery of the Missouri, the author gives some attention to Le Sueur and Pénicault, who passed the mouth of the Missouri on their journey northward to the Minnesota country in 1700.

The Sieur de la Vérendrye is called the "Columbus of the Old Northwest" in a survey of his explorations and those of his sons, by Frank B. Harper, published in the *Minneapolis Journal* for July 31. The author credits the La Vérendryes with the discovery of the "Red River of the North, the Assiniboine and Mouse rivers and the Upper Missouri — that is to say, the great plains country of northwestern Minnesota, Manitoba, North Dakota, northern South Dakota and eastern Montana."

In connection with the "Fair of the Iron Horse," held near Baltimore for three weeks during October to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, a pageant picturing the story of the development of transportation in America was presented. In the pageant appeared the "William Crooks," the first Minnesota engine, which "steamed past in quaint simplicity, and in old-fashioned yellow."

Dr. George M. Stephenson, assistant professor of history in the University of Minnesota, who recently was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for a year's study abroad, left in September for Sweden, where he will make a study of historical materials relating to the Swedish emigration to the United States. During the summer Dr. Stephenson published a volume entitled *The Founding of the Augustana Synod, 1850-1860* (Rock Island, Illinois, 160 p.), a review of which will appear in a later number of this magazine.

The second volume of the Norwegian-American Historical Association's *Studies and Records* (Northfield, Minnesota, 1927. 137 p.) contains articles on "Four Immigrant Shiploads of 1836 and 1837" by Henry J. Cadbury, on "The Norwegian Pioneer in the Field of American Scholarship" by Laurence M. Larson, and on "Norwegian Language and Literature in American Universities" by George T. Flom; an interesting series of "Norwegian Emigrant Songs" translated and edited by Martin B.

Ruud; an "America Letter" throwing light on "Immigration as Viewed by a Norwegian-American Farmer in 1869," translated and edited by Jacob Hodnefield; and a review by George M. Stephenson of J. Magnus Rohne's *Norwegian American Lutheranism up to 1872*, an important volume brought out in 1926.

An interesting contribution to Norwegian-American history is made in a volume on the history of the Coon Prairie settlement in Wisconsin by Hjalmar R. Holand. The book is entitled *Coon Prairie: En historisk beretning om den norske evangeliske lutherske menighet paa Coon Prairie. Skrevet i anledning av dens 75-aarsfest i 1927* (Minneapolis, 1927. 236 p.). Among the documents included in the volume is an interesting "America letter" written in 1847.

An account of "A Missionary Journey on the Dakota Prairies in 1886," by J. H. Blegen, which appears in the *North Dakota Historical Quarterly* for April, is translated by Theodore C. Blegen from a contemporary report published in Norwegian in *Folkebladet* (Minneapolis) in 1886. The author, a professor at Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis, made a journey to the Mouse River region with a view to organizing Lutheran congregations among the Norwegian settlers. "Perhaps the chief interest of the account is in its picture of general conditions in northwestern Dakota in the middle eighties, when railroads and pioneers were conquering the last frontier."

A series of letters which tell the story of the military service and death of Lieutenant Lyman S. Kidder in 1867 while attempting to carry dispatches to General Custer are published with a connecting narrative by Lawrence K. Fox, state historian of South Dakota, in the magazine section of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* for July 10. A sketch of Kidder's father, Judge Jefferson Kidder, a pioneer who was prominently connected with the early history of Minnesota and later of South Dakota, also is printed.

"The Sibley Trail in North Dakota" is the title of an interesting study by Dana Wright, the first two chapters of which appear in the *North Dakota Historical Quarterly* for April and July. The

author has surveyed the route of the Sibley expedition of 1863 and attempts to follow it in great detail in these articles. Accompanying the second chapter are two maps showing the Sibley trail in Ransom and Sargent counties. Extracts from the contemporary journals of Colonel William R. Marshall, Oscar Garrett Wall, and Enoch Eastman are published as supplements to Mr. Wright's narrative.

The "Reminiscences of a Railroad Builder" by L. R. Shields, published in the April *North Dakota Historical Quarterly*, are of considerable Minnesota interest, for the author, a brother of Senator James Shields, came to the "Shields settlement" near Faribault in 1871 and the next year set out for Dakota, proceeding westward from Brainerd to Fort Rice by wagon train. Most of the reminiscences deal with Indian matters and railroad building in the Dakota region. In the July number of the same magazine J. A. Gilfillan's account of "A Trip through the Red River Valley in 1864" is reprinted from volume 2 of the *North Dakota Historical Collections*. It is followed by a brief sketch of the career of Gilfillan, the noted Episcopal missionary among the Minnesota Indians after the Civil War.

A new bridge across the Missouri River at Sanish, North Dakota, was dedicated on August 5 and named in honor of La Vérendrye, the explorer.

In an article on "Manuel Lisa, One of the Earliest Traders on the Missouri River," by Charles A. Gianini, published in the *New Mexico Historical Review* for October, a statement about the value of the Spanish trader's services during the War of 1812 "by Joseph Renville, the British guide and interpreter with the Sioux during the war" is quoted: "Manuel Lisa was the American Agent and he set the Tetons against the Santees because the latter supported the English. . . . He got one of our men (Tamaha, the one-eyed Sioux) to spy on his own people and let him know all that was being done."

The Story of Sault Ste. Marie and Chippewa County by Stanley Newton (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, 1923. 199 p.) devotes a

chapter each to the "Soo" in the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. The volume is sketchy and journalistic in style.

A charming illustrated article on "Glory-of-the-Morning: a Winnebago Chieftess," by Louise Phelps Kellogg, is published in the *Wisconsin Magazine* for August. In the same magazine is a suggestive editorial entitled "The Growth of the State Idea," in which occurs the following statement: "Self-consciousness of the states is something to be encouraged, for it has its roots in intimate knowledge and appreciation of the things, the places, the events, the movements, the people, the needs which are a part of our everyday lives." State consciousness is seen as the "only abiding characteristic which saves the commonwealths from being mere provinces instead of living and separate entities in the great union of the forty-eight commonwealths."

GENERAL MINNESOTA ITEMS

The program for the Mid-west Museums Conference in St. Paul and Minneapolis on November 18 and 19 includes many items of great interest for museum workers. For the opening session, in the auditorium of the Historical Building in St. Paul, a round-table discussion is planned on the subject of the recently published *Manual for Small Museums* by Lawrence V. Coleman, to be led by Mr. Ralph N. Buckstaff of the public museum of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and Mr. Lawrence K. Fox of the State Historical Society of South Dakota. Papers for the afternoon session are scheduled on "The Wisconsin Demonstration Museum" by Mr. Buckstaff; "Coöperation with Commercial Concerns" by Mr. Willoughby M. Babcock of the Minnesota Historical Society; "Museums and Newspapers" by Mr. Roy F. Hendrickson of the Associated Press, St. Paul; and "Installing the Three Oaks, Michigan, Museum" by Mr. George R. Fox, its director. After these papers a motion picture of "Reptile Life" is to be presented by Mrs. Grace Wylie of the Minnesota Academy of Sciences. The evening program, also at the Historical Building, is to consist of an illustrated address on "Evidences of Prehistoric Man in Europe: a Recent Survey," by Dr. Albert E. Jenks, pro-

fessor of anthropology in the University of Minnesota. The main events on the program of the second day are an address, at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, on "The Art Institute and Its New Wing" by Mr. Russell Plimpton, its director; a discussion of "The Handling of a Picture Collection"; and visits to the Walker Art Gallery and the Zoölogical Museum of the University of Minnesota.

An entertaining and informing sketch of Joseph Renshaw Brown, by Martin W. Odland, is published in the *Minneapolis Tribune* for July 3. After reviewing the many-sided career of Brown, Mr. Odland offers the following observation: "It was in politics that he showed his real genius. It made no difference what public proceedings Brown took part in, before they were over he had played the leading role."

A study of the career of *Monsignor Louis E. Caillet* has been brought out recently in pamphlet form by the Very Reverend Humphrey Moynihan of St. Paul Seminary (24 p.). Father Caillet came to St. Paul in 1854 from Lyons, where he had been a seminary student. He "received his initiation into the simple ways of missionary life," writes Father Moynihan, "when he saw Bishop Cretin sweeping his own room, making his bed, chopping wood, working in the garden, and busy with many other occupations strangely out of keeping with those of an episcopal palace in France." The pamphlet tells the story of Father Caillet's long services as parish priest of St. Mary's in St. Paul, as vicar-general, and as rector of St. Paul Seminary.

One feature of the annual meeting of the Minnesota Daughters of the American Colonists on September 21 was the dedication at Lucy Wilder Morris Park in Minneapolis of trees in honor of the services to the state of three prominent educators, William Watts Folwell, Cyrus Northrop, and Maria Sanford. Brief dedicatory talks were made on Dr. Folwell by Dr. Solon J. Buck, superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society; on Dr. Northrop by the Honorable W. I. Nolan, lieutenant governor of the state; and on Professor Sanford by Mr. E. B. Pierce, field secretary of the University of Minnesota. At a session held earlier

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in the day an illustrated talk on "Minnesota Pioneer Life" was given by Dr. Theodore C. Blegen, assistant superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society.

The story of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra is reviewed on the eve of the opening of its twenty-fifth season in two Minneapolis papers, the *Journal* and the *Tribune*, for August 14. The extensive travels of the orchestra are dwelt upon in the *Journal*, and numerous details of its organization and evolution from the time of its first concert on November 5, 1903, are described in the *Tribune*. In the twenty-fifth anniversary concert, presented in Minneapolis on November 4 and in St. Paul on November 7, the orchestra reproduced, with the exception of two numbers, the program of the first concert. An artistic printed program, issued for the anniversary, includes the two programs, a brief history of the orchestra, and the names of the first and present members of the orchestra and of the orchestral association.

A friendly character sketch of Cyrus Northrop comprises one chapter in Dr. Charles F. Thwing's *Guides, Philosophers and Friends* (New York, 1927. 476 p.).

Robert Bruce Langdon and His Descendants, by Caroline Langdon Brooks (Minneapolis, 1926. 25 p.), outlines the career of an important business pioneer of the Northwest. Langdon arrived in Minnesota in the late fifties and became a noted railroad builder and construction engineer. He was also interested in politics and for twelve years, beginning in 1872, served in the state Senate. A sketch of his "Other Activities" shows that the interests of this pioneer business man reached out to an astonishing number of Minnesota enterprises.

Discussing "Types of Farmers' Attitudes" in *Social Forces* for June, Mr. Earle C. Zimmerman, on the basis of a study made with Dr. John D. Black of 345 Minnesota farmers selected at random, declares that (1) the majority reason from particular phenomena to general principles, (2) the majority reason from simple analogy, (3) the greater number think that correlation means causation, (4) they reason from universals which are generally accepted but not proved, and (5) their customary method

of interpreting economic and social forces is essentially vitalistic and personal. Mr. Zimmerman and Dr. Black have published a detailed report of their investigation in a pamphlet entitled *The Marketing Attitudes of Minnesota Farmers*, issued by the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Minnesota as *Technical Bulletin* no. 45 (December, 1926. 54 p.). The Minnesota communities studied were Askov, Cambridge, New York Mills, Ada, Moorhead, Faribault, Sleepy Eye, and Luverne. Brief but compact summaries of the characteristics of these communities add much to the usefulness of the pamphlet. The study should be of special value for those interested in the history of coöperation in the state and in the story of the Nonpartisan League.

A Study of Dairy Farm Organization in Southeastern Minnesota by George A. Pond has been issued by the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Minnesota as *Technical Bulletin* no. 4 (St. Paul, 1926. 108 p.). The study was based upon a group of representative dairy farms in Steele County, near Owatonna. A careful description of the region and an account of the "Settlement and Agricultural Development of Steele County" furnish the reader with a general background for the more technical analyses that follow.

The scattered references to Minnesota in a volume entitled *Prohibition in the United States*, by D. Leigh Colvin (New York, 1926. 678 p.), suggest the interest and importance that a history of the temperance and the prohibition movements in Minnesota would have.

"William Cairncross on Shore" is the title of an autobiography that has been edited by Captain Fred A. Bill and has been appearing serially in the *Lake City Graphic-Republican* since September 6. The Cairncross family settled near Henderson in 1861, and the author gives a vivid picture of conditions in the Minnesota Valley just before the Sioux Outbreak.

It has been announced that a history of Traverse des Sioux is being written by Mr. Thomas Hughes of Mankato and is soon to be published by the Herald Publishing Company of St. Peter. Much of the material for this work has been gathered by Colonel

W. C. Brown, a native of Traverse des Sioux, in the government archives at Washington.

The picturesque wedding of Nancy McClure and David Faribault at the treaty of Traverse des Sioux on July 11, 1851, is recalled in the *Minneapolis Journal* of July 12, in an article which tells how the bride, now Mrs. Charles Huggins of Flandreau, South Dakota, visited the treaty ground on the seventy-sixth anniversary of her wedding.

A new amphitheater on the site of Fort Ridgely was dedicated and the sixty-fifth anniversary of the siege of the fort was commemorated on August 22, when the Fort Ridgely State Park and Historical Association held its annual meeting. Among the speakers were Mr. Arthur E. Nelson, former mayor of St. Paul, and Congressman August H. Andresen of Red Wing.

Governor Christianson, Congressman O. J. Qvale, and Senator Victor Lawson were among the speakers at the dedication of the Monson Lake Memorial Park on August 21. The park commemorates the thirteen pioneers living around Monson and West lakes in Swift and Kandiyohi counties who were killed by the Indians during the Sioux War.

Little Crow and the Sioux War as recalled by Mr. George F. Whitcomb of Minneapolis, a pioneer who settled in Minnesota in 1856, are described in the *Minneapolis Journal* for August 30.

COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

The Goodhue County Historical Society arranged and successfully carried through an appropriate celebration at Frontenac on September 17 of the two-hundredth anniversary of the building of Fort Beauharnois on the shores of Lake Pepin. The central feature of the program was the unveiling of a bronze tablet bearing the following inscription: "Near this spot Fort Beauharnois was erected by the French in September, 1727. Here also stood the Mission of St. Michael the Archangel—the first Christian chapel in the present boundaries of Minnesota." The Very Reverend Humphrey Moynihan of St. Paul Seminary and Dr. John T. Fulton of the State Training School for Boys at Red Wing

were the principal speakers at the celebration, and both of them told of the little group of Frenchmen who established the Lake Pepin post in 1727. The printed program of the celebration contained "an artist's conception of Fort Beauharnois," by Fletcher Sultzner of St. Louis, and a list of "Points of Interest" in the vicinity of Frontenac, with notes explaining their historical associations. That the celebration aroused considerable interest in the story of the French régime in Minnesota is evidenced not only by the fact that more than seven hundred people were present but also by the generous newspaper publicity that it occasioned. Special mention should be made of a sketch of the history of the "last French fort on the upper river" by C. A. Rasmussen, in the *Red Wing Daily Republican* for July 5.

A very successful summer meeting was held by the St. Louis County Historical Society at Biwabik on July 28. The sessions were held in the auditorium of the local park pavilion with at least five hundred persons present. Papers were presented on the "History of Biwabik," by F. S. Colvin; "The Coming of the Railroad to Biwabik," by Horace Johnson; the "History of the Biwabik Schools," by B. M. Seeley; the "History of St. Louis County Agriculture," by Harold Aase; "Farm Development," by W. F. Haenke; and "Hospitals in the Biwabik Country," by Dr. C. W. Bray. Thus the meeting was used as a means of exploiting intensively the history of this one community and may be regarded as another illustration of the effective way in which the St. Louis County Historical Society, under the leadership of its president, the Honorable William E. Culkin, is reaching out to all parts of the area which it serves.

The activities of the organization during the past year have been summarized in a report, dated November 7, a copy of which has been presented by Mr. Culkin to the Minnesota Historical Society. This reveals that during 1927 the St. Louis County society held two program meetings; that valuable books, manuscripts, and museum objects were acquired; and that considerable progress was made in cataloging pictures and arranging the library of about six hundred volumes. Special mention is made of a collection of books by St. Louis County authors and of a group of "Indian language books." The society now has

175 members, 25 new members having been added during the year.

The newly organized Otter Tail County Historical Society arranged an historical exhibit for a local fair held at Perham in August and a larger exhibit, with a special demonstration of spinning, for the county fair held at Fergus Falls from September 14 to 17. In preparing for these exhibits the society solicited from the public "early spinning wheels, guns, cradles, yokes, mowing and reaping machines, old justice court dockets and other early records." A meeting of the society was held at the county fair grounds on September 16, at which several short talks on various phases of the county's history were given. In its annual report, dated October 16, a copy of which has been filed with the Minnesota Historical Society, the Otter Tail County organization states that it now has twenty-six members and that it "has permission to put cases for display of articles in an assembly room in the courthouse and to keep its records in another room."

About two hundred people attended the summer meeting of the Rice County Historical Society, held at Cannon City on July 18. Dr. F. F. Kramer presented a sketch of the early history of Cannon City, and Miss Grace McKinstry reviewed Edward Eggleston's *Mystery of Metropolisville*, which has its setting in the Cannon City of the late fifties. A paper giving a cross section of early Cannon City life, based for the most part upon the unpublished federal census schedules for 1860 and 1870 and prepared by Dr. Theodore C. Blegen of the Minnesota Historical Society, was read by Mrs. H. C. Theopold. Miss McKinstry's paper appears in the *Northfield News* for August 5.

The annual meeting of the society was held at Faribault on October 24. The report of the secretary, Mr. H. L. Buck of Faribault, telling of the year's activities, was presented at this meeting and later a copy was filed with the Minnesota Historical Society. From this survey it is apparent that the Rice County society has had a very successful year. It now has 106 active members, of whom 67 are charter members; and 34 territorial pioneers have been elected to honorary membership. Four well-attended meetings have been held during the year. An interesting

project of the society for the coming winter is a high school essay contest, intended to stimulate interest in Rice County history. The president of the society, Dr. C. A. Duniway, who was unanimously reëlected at the October meeting, has offered twenty dollars in cash prizes for the best essays submitted. The society has adopted an aggressive policy with reference to the collection of historical materials, for a special committee is studying the problem of getting the reminiscences of old settlers of Rice County recorded and preserved. In accordance with a provision in the society's constitution, it has recently become an institutional member of the Minnesota Historical Society.

It is clear that the foundations for successful local historical activity in Rice County have been well laid. In an address at the October meeting, as reported in the *Northfield News* for October 28, Dr. Duniway spoke of the day when the historical records assembled by the society "may be properly housed in fireproof vaults in the court house or in a suitable building given for that purpose by some public-spirited citizen of the county." At the same meeting Mr. Einar O. Hammer, managing editor of the *Faribault Daily News*, read a paper on the history of the first hotel in Faribault, the Nutting House, based in part upon the register of this hotel for 1855 and 1856, a document now in the possession of Walter M. Nutting, a grandson of the proprietor. Another paper presented at the meeting was that by Dr. Francis L. Palmer of Seabury Divinity School on the American Indians, and he also exhibited a collection of Indian objects found by himself "near Cannon Lake and along the Cannon and Straight rivers." Miss Stella Cole of Faribault told of the plans that have been worked out by the society's special committee for collecting the reminiscences of pioneers.

An interesting addition to the manuscript sources in the possession of the Rice County society is a volume containing the minutes of the Northfield Lyceum, which held its first meeting in the schoolhouse of that city on October 1, 1856. An account based upon this record is published in the *Northfield News* for August 5. Some of the subjects of the lyceum's debates are given: "that woman is entitled to all the rights, social and political, to which man is entitled"; "that dancing is a proper amusement of young

people"; "that the cause of temperance is not promoted otherwise than by moral suasion." The lyceum undertook the erection of a building in Northfield that was used as a library and reading room and as a meeting place.

LOCAL HISTORY ITEMS

An interview with Mr. Elijah S. Rogers, a pioneer resident of Anoka, is reported by Florence Lehmann in the *Minneapolis Journal* for September 10. He tells of the overland journey from Maine in 1854, when his family settled in Anoka, and of relations with Chippewa Indians who lived in the vicinity.

"How Starving Captives Found Anoka" is the title of an article by Florence Lehmann in the *Minneapolis Journal* of September 25 which tells of Hennepin's journey past the mouth of the Rum River in 1680; of Carver's alleged visit to the same place in 1766; of the building of a trading post on the site of Anoka in 1844; and, finally, of the founding of the town and its subsequent growth. Announcement is made in the article of the plan of the Minnesota Daughters of the American Colonists to erect at the mouth of the Rum River a tablet in memory of Hennepin.

In "A Few Reminiscences," published in the *Sauk Rapids Sentinel* of August 18, Mr. W. H. Fletcher tells the story of the mill at the mouth of Sauk River, which was built by Colonel S. L. Hays in 1859. He also recalls some interesting local happenings — for example, the wedding of the colored cook in the Hays home and a young Negro employed by the Reverend David Lowry. "Everyone was eager to be present," according to the writer, "as, besides the disparity in the ages of the contracting parties, they were the only representatives of their race and color living in this part of the country."

The First Norwegian Baptist Church of Artichoke, in Big Stone County, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary on July 31. A history of the church is published in the *Ortonville Independent* for August 4.

A history of the United Brethren Church of Beauford appears in the *Blue Earth County Enterprise* of Mapleton for August 5.

Interesting bits of Carver County and Chaska history are revealed in a special home-coming edition of the *Weekly Valley Herald* of Chaska, issued on July 14. It includes a general sketch of Carver County history; the story of the founding of Chaska in 1851 by Thomas A. Holmes as a town-site speculation; an account of the first meeting of the district court at Chaska on July 16, 1856; a description of the flood of 1881, when the rise of the Minnesota River transformed the town into a "typical Venice"; and a short statement about the Catholic mission established at Chaska in 1842 by Father Ravoux. In addition there are numerous reminiscences and sketches of old settlers, including Joseph Ess, Frederick E. Du Toit, Mrs. Linus J. Lee, and Judge L. L. Baxter.

Fifty Years of Bethlehem Lutheran Congregation, Ulen, Minnesota, 1876-1926, by G. Kluxdal and O. E. Reiersgord (85 p.), is an interesting local church history.

The history of the old Catherine Fee House at Mendota is reviewed by Florence Lehmann in an article in the *Minneapolis Journal* for July 11. A picture of the house appears with the article. On July 14 the same author has an article in the *Journal* comparing two other Mendota homes of pioneer days, the Sibley House and the Faribault House.

To celebrate a century of white settlement in Dakota County, home-coming festivities were held at Farmington on July 18. The most important feature of the celebration was the historic pageant in six episodes depicting the founding of Fort Snelling, the beginnings of settlement at Mendota, early days at Hastings, the arrival of a steamboat bringing the news of Minnesota's admission to the Union, and other scenes in the history and progress of the county. A special edition of the *Dakota County Tribune* of Farmington, issued in honor of the celebration on July 15, contains numerous articles of historical interest, including sketches of the early history of Farmington, Mendota, Rosemount, Lakerville, Hampton, Castle Rock, Randolph, Hastings, and Nininger.

Portions of an "Autobiography of An Early Settler," Andrew Langum, who left Norway in 1853 and settled in Fillmore County, are published in the *Preston Times* for July 21 and 28.

A history of the schools of Fillmore County from 1854 to the present appears in the *Tri-County Record* of Rushford for September 1. For the earlier years the narrative is based upon an account compiled by William Willford in 1904. A picture of the little log building that served as the county's first schoolhouse appears with the article.

Some reminiscences of a pioneer physician, Dr. E. P. Case, who began to practice at Waterville in 1876, appear in the *Le Sueur Center Leader* of July 28. "One thing that shocks me now almost as much as it did then," writes the doctor after looking over his old ledger, "was the fact that I had 68 cases of diphtheria on my hands that winter inside of 60 days."

The picturesque early history of Hutchinson is exploited in a series of articles in the *Hutchinson Leader* beginning on August 5. The first article describes the founding of the town by the musical Hutchinson brothers; the second, published on August 12, tells how the money for the first mill was raised by the brothers on a concert tour. Three articles appearing on August 19 and 26 and September 2 deal with the Sioux War in the vicinity of Hutchinson.

Another group of articles about the Hutchinson region, prepared by Win V. Working, has been appearing in the *Hutchinson Press*. In the issues of August 11 and 18 he tells of some of the pioneer Danish settlers of McLeod County; "When Wheat Was King Here in Nineties" is the title of the sketch published on September 15; and stories of early McLeod County churches appear on September 22.

"With a list of its inhabitants on record in the archives of the Census Bureau at Washington, D. C., but with no knowledge or recollection of its existence to be found in the memory of even the oldest pioneers, the case of Connwell City, Murray County, possesses all the elements of a real mystery," according to an article in the *Fulda Free Press* for August 25. A list of the inhabitants of the city, as it appears in the census enumeration of October, 1857, is published with the article. The origin of this list is the "real mystery," for Connwell City never developed

beyond the stage of a town site project. It was planned by William Pitt Murray and was to be located on Lake Shetek, but the Sioux War and other factors prevented its development. Nevertheless, in the census of 1857 it is credited with many more inhabitants than are listed for the entire county in the census of 1860, and none of the names that appear on the first list are to be found on the second.

A list of the men who have filled the various county offices in Otter Tail County from 1868 to the present is published in the *Fergus Falls Daily Journal* for July 9.

A trip from Fergus Falls to Battle Lake by railroad in 1882, when "passengers rode in freight cars with wooden benches for seats," is described in an interview with Captain James E. Colehour of Battle Lake, published in the *Fergus Falls Daily Journal* of July 14. Captain Colehour also pictures pioneer conditions in Fergus Falls and Battle Lake.

Minneskrift 1874-1927 is the title of a congregational history issued by the Central Swede Grove Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Pelican Rapids, Otter Tail County (Minneapolis, 1927. 147 p.). The volume, which is written in Swedish, opens with a brief account of the geographical backgrounds of Central Swede Grove and then tells of its settlement and pioneer life. An unusually interesting chapter follows on the agriculture and industry of the community. The story of the church is then taken up and is followed by numerous biographical sketches. Many illustrations, including an excellent one of a covered wagon, enhance the value of the book.

Incidents in the early history of Renville County are described by Win V. Working in articles that appear from time to time in the *Morton Enterprise*. These include an account of the "war" between Beaver Falls and Olivia in 1894 for the county seat of Renville County, July 7; an interview with Judge Elba C. Fuller of Morton, August 4; a description of some of the experiences of Robert Henton in the Sioux War, August 18; and stories of the descendants of Fred Blume, a German immigrant of the fifties, who now live in the vicinity of Morton, September 15.

Members of the Valley Grove congregation near Nerstrand celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of their church on July 31. A history of the congregation, prepared for this celebration by O. H. Stenbakken, is summarized in the *Northfield News* of August 5.

A series of local history sketches in the *Montgomery Messenger* includes several articles about Shieldsville, the town established by James Shields. These appear in the issues of August 5 and 12, and September 16 and 23.

Minnesota's Last Frontier, by J. W. Durham (48 p.), is a compact account of the history of Roseau County, Minnesota, made up of articles originally published in the *Roseau Times-Region*. The author bases much of his story upon reminiscences, for he established himself in the county in 1887, after a preliminary trip to the region a year earlier. An interesting portion of the pamphlet is devoted to a picture of social conditions in the community, and one section tells of an Indian scare of 1891 that the author states "came near depopulating the country" though it was without foundation.

A two-day celebration held at Henderson on August 20 and 21 marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the town by Joseph R. Brown in 1852. A feature of the celebration was the unveiling of a monument on August 21 to John Other Day, a Sioux Indian who saved the lives of many white settlers during the outbreak of 1862.

An historic pageant presented in a miniature village erected for the occasion was a feature of the celebration that marked the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of New Richland on September 15 and 16. Further evidence of the interest in the historic past of the community aroused by the anniversary is to be found in the "historical museum" of pioneer objects, which was visited by more than a thousand people; and in the "Golden Jubilee Edition" of the *New Richland Star*, issued on September 9. The paper contains a number of articles on local history — for example, a sketch of the history of New Richland, based upon early newspapers and a business directory; an account of the actions of

the village council, drawn from its proceedings; and histories of the schools and churches of the community.

The history of Stillwater was reviewed on August 2, 3, and 4 in a pageant given at that place. In an old stagecoach, once used between St. Paul and Stillwater, fourteen early residents of Stillwater, arrayed in old-fashioned costumes, were brought to the pageant.

A sketch of the career of Dr. Arthur Steen, who has served the community around Cottage Grove for fifty-three years, appears in the *Washington County Post* of Stillwater for September 8. With a saddle horse carrying specially constructed saddle bags that held medicine bottles, Dr. Steen was able to make calls far from his office.

A parade composed of floats picturing scenes in the historical and industrial development of Winona was the opening event of a four-day celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the city, which took place from July 1 to 4.

"Men Who Have Helped Make Minnesota" is the title of a series of sketches of people who have been prominent in the history of the region around Granite Falls, published in the *Granite Falls News*. Among those whose careers are outlined are Ole O. Ellefson, July 1; John J. Mooney, July 15; Colonel Barney Kelehan, July 22; Siver Olson, August 5; William J. Rice, August 19; and the Reverend Ole Logensgaard, September 16. Many of the sketches contain interesting stories of immigrant journeys from the Scandinavian countries and Ireland, or of westward emigration from the East.

In commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of Osseo by Pierre Bottineau and three other trappers, a celebration was held at that place on August 28.

What is said to be the "oldest Episcopal chapel now standing in Minnesota," Trinity Chapel erected at Excelsior in 1864, is the subject of an article, accompanied by a picture of the chapel, in the *Minneapolis Journal* for September 11.

The career of Captain George V. Hopkins, who has been a "Tonka Skipper for 50 Years," is described in an article in the *Minneapolis Tribune* for September 11. His present boat, the "Victor," is said to be the sole survivor of the ninety or more steamboats that have operated on Lake Minnetonka.

Reminiscences of the Twin Cities in the late fifties and early sixties and of adventures with the Sibley expedition of 1863 by a pioneer resident of Minneapolis, Mr. Burke O'Brien, now of Pierre, South Dakota, appear with his portrait in the *Minneapolis Journal* for September 16.

A history of the parish of Notre Dame de Lourdes of Minneapolis, founded by a group of French-Canadians fifty years ago, appears in the *Minneapolis Tribune* for July 3. On July 10 special services were held to mark the golden anniversary of the church.

The growth of Minneapolis is graphically illustrated in a map, published in the *Minneapolis Journal* for July 1, which shows the various additions to the area of the city since 1855.

Early days on Nicollet Island are recalled by Mrs. Margaret Calladine of Minneapolis in an interview in the *Minneapolis Journal* for July 3. Mrs. Calladine came to Minneapolis as a bride in 1866, and in the following year established a home on the island.

Mr. Edmund T. Montgomery has brought out in an edition of ninety-five copies *A Half Dozen Wood Cuts of Minneapolis* (Minneapolis, 1926), "printed from the original blocks in a hand press on hand made paper." The views are of the Third Avenue bridge, the Federal Reserve bank, Lake of the Isles, Lowry Hill, the river plats in winter, and the towering "Grain Castles on the Mississippi"—the flour mills.

Local church archives have furnished much of the historical material incorporated in the *Golden Jubilee of the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1875-1925* (Minneapolis, 1925. 32 p.). Pictures of all the pastors who have served the congregation add to the interest of the pamphlet.

The Central Presbyterian Church of St. Paul has issued a book entitled *Seventy-fifth Anniversary: Proceedings* (St. Paul, 1927. 109 p.), containing numerous addresses given on the occasion of the anniversary celebration. A valuable "Historical Sketch" is supplied by Mr. Walter H. Vinson, and Mr. T. D. Simonton has written a series of "Character Sketches of Pastors" who have served the congregation. An interesting letter written in 1902 by Mrs. Catherine C. Riheldaffer, the widow of the Reverend John G. Riheldaffer, the first pastor, supplies many details about the establishment of the church in 1852.

The career of Captain Fred A. Bill of St. Paul, a pioneer riverman, is outlined by Florence Lehmann in the *Minneapolis Journal* for September 1.

